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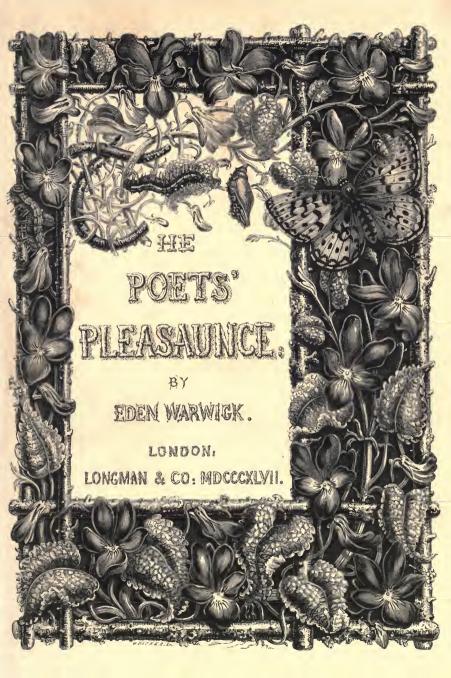


The

Poets' Pleasaunce.

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THE

Poets' Pleasaunce:

OR.

GARDEN OF ALL SORTS OF PLEASANT FLOWERS,

WHICH OUR PLEASANT POETS HAVE, IN PAST TIME,
FOR PASTIME, PLANTED.

BY EDEN WARWICK.

JABET, George

"——— a floury grene,
Full thick of grass, full soft and sweet,
With floures fele faire undir feet,
And little used."

CHAUCER.



LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

MDCCCXLVII.



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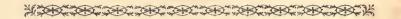
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Preface.



The design of the present work is to illustrate the extent of homage which our best Poets, prior to the present century, have paid to Nature, in Flowers—her most delicately beautiful productions. It is proposed in fact to treat of Flowers on the plan which "Christopher North" suggests would make a beautiful work if applied to Birds, viz.—to collect all that in former times has been sung in their praise; and it is the intention of the Author, in a subsequent volume, to carry out this suggestion respecting the feathered Favourites of Nature.

At the same time it is intended to exhibit a HISTORY OF THE POETRY OF FLOWERS, both collectively and individually; confining the selection, however, to those Flowers only which have been celebrated in verse during at least two of the periods into which we have divided the Poets. For the purpose of developing these Histories more clearly, the extracts have, in each instance, been arranged in chronological order, according to the periods in which they were written. These periods are defined, and the reasons for their adoption given, in the "Essays on Floral

Poetry;" and an Index to the early British Poets whose writings have been perused for the purpose of this work, is prefixed for the guidance of the reader in respect to dates.

As far as regards Poets prior to the present century, the selections, it will be found, are nearly complete; further I do not profess to earry my extracts, except by the occasional introduction of such brief allusions, as, being scattered through the general works of more modern Poets, are less known and less frequently cited than those entire pieces on Flowers in which they have so profusely indulged. It is in this respect, and in its chronological and systematic arrangement, that, I believe, this compilation will be found principally to differ from its predecessors, in all of which the old Poets have been neglected to make room for our cotemporaries, whose writings are in every one's hands.

With the exception of Shakspere's (whose beautiful illustrations of Flowers it would have been treason to omit), no purely dramatic works, anonymous pieces, or avowed translations have been quoted; and the extracts, moreover, have been made only from those Poets whose writings have, by universal consent, procured for them a niche in the "Temple of Fame."

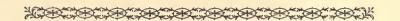
The Introduction is an attempt to revive, in modern phraseology, a favourite style of composition of the Elizabethan age; in which, under the allegory of a "Peep into Parnassus," "The Muses' Elysium," &c., were depicted the manners of cotemporary and deceased Poets; and from which we often gain an insight into the character of writers of whose social habits we should otherwise have been wholly ignorant.

For the Flower borders at the commencement of each chapter I am indebted to the pencil of Mr. H. N. Humphreys; and I cannot but acknowledge my peculiar good fortune in having obtained the congenial aid of so experienced a Naturalist, whose knowledge is so happily combined with the power of tasteful delineation, and who has here shown how successfully the beauties of Middle-age Art may be rendered available to modern purposes.

E. W.







Chronological List of British Poets.

9

Division I.

1380 to 1570.

					BORN		DIED
Gower, John					1326	•	1408
CHAUCER, GEOFFREY .					1328		1400
Lydgate, John					1375		1462
James I. (of Scotland)					1395	٠,	1437
HENRYSOUN, ROBERT .					1425		1495
Dunbar, William .					1460		1520
Douglass, Gawin .					1475		1522
Skelton, John					1463		1529
HAWES, STEPHEN					1480		
LYNDESAY, SIR DAVID					1490		1553
Неуwood, Јони					1500		1565
WYATT, SIR THOMAS .					1503		1541
SURREY, EARL OF .					1516		1547

	BORN	DIED
GRIMOALD, NICHOLAS	1520	1563
Edwards, Richard	1523	1566
TUSSER, THOMAS	1523	1580
Scot, Alexander	1525	
Harington, John	1534	1582
SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST	1527	1608
TURBERVILLE, GEORGE	1540	
Gascoigne, George	1540	1578



Division II.

1570 ta 1640.

Montgomery, Alexander						
GREEN, ROBERT				1550		1592
RALEIGH, SIR WALTER .				1552		1618
Spenser, Edmund				1553		1599
LYLIE, JOHN				1553		1600
SIDNEY, SIR PHILIP				1554		1586
Breton, Nicholas				1555		1624
CHAPMAN, GEORGE				1557		1634
WARNER, WILLIAM				1558		1608
SOUTHWELL, ROBERT				1560		1595
WATSON, THOMAS				1560		1591
Lodge, Thomas				1560		1625
HARINGTON, SIR JOHN .				1561		1612

									BORN		DIED
Daniel, Samuel .								٠	1562		
MARLOWE, CHRISTOPE	HEI	3.	•	•	•	•		٠	1562	٠	1592
Sylvester, Joshua					•	٠	•		1563		1618
DRAYTON, MICHAEL								٠	1563		1631
SHAKSPERE, WILLIAM	1								1564		1616
CONSTABLE, HENRY									1566		
WOTTON, SIR HENRY									1568		1639
DAVIES, SIR JOHN									1570		1626
SMITH, WILLIAM .									1571		
Hume, Alexander											1609
DONNE, DR. JOHN .									1573		1631
HALL, DR. JOSEPH									1574		1656
Jonson, Ben									1574		1637
BARNFIELD, RICHARD									1574		
PEACHAM, HENRY.											
FLETCHER, JOHN .									1576		1625
Heywood, Thomas									1580		
ALEXANDER, WM., E.	ARI	. 0	F S	STII	RLI	ΝG			1580		1640
CORBET, RICHARD .									1582		1635
Davison, Francis.									1582		
BEAUMONT, SIR JOHN									1582		1628
FLETCHER, PHINEAS									1584		1650
FLETCHER, GILES .									1585		1623
BEAUMONT, FRANCIS									1585		1615
DRUMMOND, WILLIAM									1585		1649
NICCOLS, RICHARD									1584		
KINASTON, SIR FRANC	IS								1585		1642

							BORN		DIED
MURRAY, DAVID .				•			1586		
WITHER, GEORGE.							1588		1667
CAREW, THOMAS .							1589		1639
Browne, William							1590		1645
KING, DR. HENRY							1591		1669
HERRICK, ROBERT				٠			1591		
Quarles, Francis							1592		1644
HERBERT, GEORGE							1593		1632
SHIRLEY, JAMES .							1594		1666
HANNAY, PATRICK.							1594		
May, Thomas							1595		1650
Mennis, Sir John							1598		1670
SMITH, DR. JAMES							1604		1667
RANDOLPH, THOMAS							1605		1634
HABINGTON, WILLIA	M						1605		1654
- CHALKHILL, JOHN .					٠				



Division RKK.

1640 ta 1725.

D'AVENANT, SIR WILLIAM .				1605		1668
WALLER, EDMOND				1605		1687
FANSHAWE, SIR RICHARD .				1607		1666
MILTON, JOHN				1608		1674

C									BORN			DIED
Suckling, Sir John									1608		٠	1641
CARTWRIGHT, WILLIAM .										٠		1643
Crashaw, Richard										٠		1650
Butler, Samuel									1612		•	
CLEVELAND, JOHN		•	•	•	•		•	٠	1613	•	•	1658
VAUGHAN, HENRY			•		•	٠		•	1614	•	٠	1695
DENHAM, SIR JOHN					•		•		1615		•	1668
LOVELACE, RICHARD									1618			1658
Cowley, Abraham									1618			1667
SHERBURNE, SIR EDWARD)								1618			
MARVELL, ANDREW									1620			1678
CHAMBERLAYNE, WILLIAM									1619			1689
STANLEY, THOMAS									1620			1678
COTTON, CHARLES									1630			1687
PHILLIPS, CATHERINE .									1631			1664
DRYDEN, JOHN									1631			1701
NEWCASTLE, DUCHESS OF												1673
Roscommon, Earl of .									1633			1684
SEDLEY, SIR CHARLES .									1639			1701
DORSET, EARL OF									1637			1706
ROCHESTER, EARL OF .									1647			1680
BUCKINGHAM, DUKE OF .									1649			1721
PRIOR, MATTHEW									1664			1721
Pomfret, John									1667			1703
SWIFT, JONATHAN									1667			1745
PHILLIPS, AMBROSE												1749
GARTH, SIR SAMUEL												1718
•												

						BOKN		DIED
Addison, Joseph			٠	٠		1672	٠	1719
Watts, Dr. Isaac .						1674		1748
PHILLIPS, JOHN					•	1676		1708
PARNELL, THOMAS .						1679		1718
Somerville, William						1682		1742
HILL, AARON						1684		
TICKELL, THOMAS						1686		1740
RAMSAY, ALLAN					•	1686	•	1758
Pope, Alexander .						1688		1744
GAY, JOHN						1688		1732
WINCHELSEA, COUNTESS	OF							1720
GREEN, MATTHEW .						1696		1737
BROOME, DR. WILLIAM						1690		1745
SAVAGE, RICHARD						1698		1743
Young, Dr. Edward						1681		1765



Division IV.

1725 ta 1780.

Thomson, James	•					1700		1748
BLAIR, ROBERT						1699		1746
Dyer, John .						1700		1758
MALLET, DAVID						1700		1765
HARTE, WALTER								

Hamilton, William .					1704		1754
Dodsley, Robert							
Armstrong, Dr. John					1709		1779
Johnson, Dr. Samuel					1709		1784
Lyttleton, Lord					1709		1773
Moore, Dr. Edward					1711		
THOMPSON, WILLIAM.							
HAMMOND, DR. JAMES							1742
SHENSTONE, WILLIAM							1763
Brown, Dr. John .							
GRAY, THOMAS					1716		
Smollett, Thomas .					1721		1771
BLACKLOCK, THOMAS .							1791
COTTON, NATHANIEL .							1788
GRAINGER, DR. JAMES					1721		1766
MERRICK, JAMES					1720		1766
AKENSIDE, MARK							1770
Collins, William .					1720		1756
WHITEHEAD, WILLIAM							1785
WARTON, THOMAS					1728		1790
WARTON, JOSEPH					1722		1800
SMART, CHRISTOPHER					1722		1770
ANSTEY, CHRISTOPHER					1724		1805
COOPER, DR. JOHN G.					1723		
CARTER, ELIZABETH .					1717		1806
CHAPONE, HESTER .							1801
Mason, William					1725		1797

				1728	٠	1774
				1728		1811
				1729		1773
٠				1730		1783
				1730		1769
				1733		1764
				1734		1788
				1735		1779
			**	1735		1803
				1741		1764
				1746		1794
				1746		1767
				1748		1788
				1752		1770
						1775
				1751		1774
					 1728 1729 1730 1730 1733 1734 1735 1736 1741 1746 1748 1752	



Division V.

1780 ta

COWPER, WILLIAM					1731		1800
Burns, Robert .					1759		1779

&c. &c. &c.



The Introduction.



A Reverie.



CHAUCER to the present day have adorned ENGLISH LITERATURE, and was sitting at a late hour musing on the subject of my studies, when methought I was suddenly transported, on the wings of a gentle wind, into a region whose prevailing characteristic was a sweet stillness, where "not a breath crept through the rosy air," which was redolent of the intermingled perfumes of the numerous and varied flowers which enamelled the ground. At a short distance rose a circular temple, surrounded by lofty pillars, of pure white marble, partially veiled by opal-tinted clouds, which descending around the base, seemed to support it above the earth, and at the same time painted with their gorgeous hues the reflecting surfaces of the polished columns.

As I approached, the clouds rolled away, and I perceived a doorway in the building, over which was inscribed, in black letter, "Open to those who surmount the Clouds." As there was no apparent obstruction, I ventured to enter, and after passing through a vestibule adorned with statues commemorative of the most noted names in British Poetry, I advanced into an inner circular apartment, or enclosed space, whose only roof was

"That whereon the gods do tread;"

for the glorious many-coloured clouds, in hue like the messenger of Jove, formed the resplendent canopy in whose lustrous haze the summits of the airy-looking walls were softly blended.

The apartment was ornamented with numerous pictures, varied and relieved by single statues and sculptured groups, composed of divers chaste-coloured marbles.

I perceived that these sculptures and paintings were figurative of the principal British Poets; some allegorical, some representing their principal works, and others the authors themselves. Thus, the four seasons of the year with their appropriate emblems, amongst which the Daisy was conspicuous in each, represented Chaucer. A brilliant but not oppressive Sun, whose beams penetrated the deepest recesses of a dark and fearful wood, and dragged into light its most secret places, allegorically portrayed the heart-searching power of Shakspere. A full Moon, whose light threw a piercing ray on the obscure solemnity of a dark night, which previously appeared impenetrable by human eye, called up the image of Milton, singing of "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." A figure of celestial airiness and grace, combined with a majestic staidness and holy simplicity, extended a favouring glance on one, who, reclining on the grassy bank of a silvery river, * besought her protection, and dedicated to her service the best efforts of his Muse. It joyed me to see the favouring glance of the "Faerie Queen" repay the labours of the imaginative Spenser. My attention was next arrested by a quaint device, which, with some difficulty, I discovered to be a Chart of England and Wales, in which the rivers were portrayed by beautiful naiads and river gods, the open country by hamadryads, and each county by its appropriate productions. This was a delineation of DRAY-TON'S voluminous and fanciful "Polyolbion." Intermixed with these were many others of much beauty, but which it would occupy too much time to describe.

Continuing to advance, I arrived at a series of figures of an entirely different character, many of which were disagreeable to the sight. All allegories drawn from Nature ceased; and classes of writers, rather than individuals, were represented. In divers places, I saw figures bowing

^{* &}quot;Amongst the coolly shade
Of the green alders, by the Mulla's shore."—colin clout.

in attitudes of fawning adulation and affected respect to an unrepresented personage. These figures had, Janus-like, two faces: the side next to the person apparently addressed, glowed with the most intense admiration, mingled with abject humility; the other side exhibited inherent vanity and petty insolence, associated with undisguised contempt. Other figures laboured incessantly at the task of writing, and while I wondered at the facility of composition with which the Muse inspired such rapid penmen, I saw a guinea dropt into the withered unemployed hand, and the illumination which its touch seemed to spread over the emaciated hungry face of the receiver, told me whence the pen's inspiration flowed. I recoiled with disgust from the repulsive sight, wondering to see statues recording the works of such men. Further reflection, and the remembrance of their names, however, satisfied me that under better inspiration, even they had produced works worthy of commemoration, and thus gained from the justice of the Muse a niche in her Temple; while the dark and prevailing side of their characters was portrayed, in order to warn aspirants to fame against the vices which had overwhelmed and paralyzed these naturally brilliant geniuses. Figures more repulsive than any I had hitherto seen followed next. They were those of snarling cowardly Dogs, which appeared to be flying and barking at the heels of every passenger. Private pique, or the hope of frightening the assailed into throwing them a sop, seemed the only provocatives. I had no difficulty in recognizing the Satirists. Here also sat a figure, oppressed by bodily deformity, anxiously watching a variety of gay and glittering groups of elegantly attired persons, in whose pleasures he was unable to partake. One group was lounging over the table of a coffee-house, and criticising a small pamphlet wet from the press; others were engrossed at ombre or quadrille, while others were laughing heartily at a lewd joke, which brought a blush into the face of a young girl, apparently a novice at the mysteries of the tea-table. The watchful figure seemed intent to discover the motives which actuated the persons he beheld, and was not long in arriving at the too just conclusion, that "self-love" was the basis of all their actions. Applying the result of his limited observation to the world at large, he seemed to felicitate himself on having discovered the secret springs of human conduct, and the Author of the "Essay on Man" was brought forcibly to my mind,

Hurrying away from these very uninteresting groups, I passed several figures, some of which were of a more agreeable caste, until my attention was arrested by one reclining on a "sofa," and evidently occupied in the pleasing "task" of inditing the simple truth, without regard to the pleasure or hatred of the world. The countenance exhibited religious faith, combined with the deepest humility, and possessed a sweetness and simplicity which inspired love and confidence. He wrote with ease and freedom, penning down his thoughts as they arose, without labouring to clothe them in glowing language, or to elicit anything strikingly new or unusually profound. After the moral degradation which I had been contemplating, it was a great relief to gaze upon the kindly face of Cowper. The next figure was that of a Rustic, occupied at the plough; but his earnest upward look of gratitude and respect filled me with awe, for I found myself in the presence of Burns, addressed by the "Scottish Muse."

Further on, I beheld Prometheus bound to a rock with the ceaseless vulture gnawing his entrails, and I sorrowfully thought on the mighty heart of Byron consumed by its own fires. Close to this, stood a compound form, whose head was that of an Angel, the breast that of a Man, and the lower parts those of a Demon; yet was not the figure incongruous, for the angelic character of the upper parts shed a ray of beauty over, and in part concealed, the repulsiveness of the lower. To Shelley alone could I assign this Sphinx-like form. Next was a figure of Endymion, gently reposing on "heaped-up flowers," with eyelids half-raised to meet the tender ray of a vivid moon-beam.* My attention was next attracted to a picture which expressed more tender melancholy than any representation I had yet seen. Cowering amid the leaves of a withering Myrtle sat a Ring-dove brooding over her young, yet with outstretched neck seeming to watch mournfully the flight of her mate, who was just visible in the distance.†

It was not until my eyes had wandered over the entire series, that I became conscious that I was in the presence of a superior being, who was seated on an elevated throne, nearly in the centre of the apartment. It was one of the unstartling contrarieties characteristic of dreams, that I felt no surprise at not having previously noticed the throne and its

occupant. However, I now approached, and with an involuntary feeling of awe and reverence made my obeisance. She signed me to rise—I did so, and beheld a majestic and beautiful woman, verging, perhaps, towards the decline of life; but certainly not more than to give an expression of intellectual strength to her original beauty. Her features were of a fair Saxon character, "with yelewe haire like to the Sonnis beame," and her blue eyes also betrayed the same origin. Her's had evidently been a happy and vigorous youth; yet her countenance bore, beneath the smile of hope, the traces of past sorrow. She resembled a bride, who had for a time been deserted by a once loving husband, but having at last been restored to his repentant heart, received him without doubt or reproach.

On a pedestal by her side lay an ancient British harp, carved out of the heart of a consecrated oak, and entwined by a wreath composed of the Rose, the Thistle, and the Shamrock. I knew myself to be in the presence of The British Muse.

I was too deeply impressed with veneration to speak; but in a soft silvery tone she thus addressed me:—"You have beheld the representations of my varied troop of worshippers. Behind you silver gates, are the gardens in which their originals repose. It is permitted you to enter."

She spoke no more; but while my heart glowed with the delightful anticipation of seeing those, whose god-like minds had illumined the earth, now enjoying a happy and gentle rest after their labours, the silver gates, self-moving on their hinges to the sound of aerial music, opened, and displayed to view a long vista of trees; beyond which, spread out as far as the eye could scan, a garden-land, rich in every variety of land-scape. There was the wild heath, rivalling the tints of the sky in the richness of its purple flowers and golden gorse; the cultivated knot and smooth-shaven lawn; the mountain wild and valley sweet; while copse, wood, wilderness, and pasture, through which flowed rivers and murmured brooks, broken by dashing cataracts and tinkling waterfalls, added charms inexpressible to the scene.

Availing myself of the permission granted, I passed the threshold. Instantly a sudden change took place in my whole frame. If a butterfly could describe its sensations when, first springing from the dark aurelia, it flutters and soars a gorgeous winged gem over the flowers at whose

root it had just crawled a loathsome worm, I might adopt its language to express my feelings at the moment I set my foot within The Muses' Elysium. My soul was disencumbered of my body and floated through the air at the impulse of its will, without stay or hindrance. To see without eyes, to hear without ears, and to feel without touch, were exquisite delights: so exquisite, that to a disembodied spirit alone could they be pleasurable. Such heightened sensations, if associated with material organs, would have produced "death of a rose in aromatic pain," but to the extensile and ethereal spirit, they were only a source of pure gratification.

But it is in vain to attempt to describe the indescribable. Language is inadequate to convey my movements in that state; for to say that I moved or walked implies organic action, incompatible with my then state of being. But it would require too much circumlocution to adopt

other phraseology.

Having advanced down the vista of trees, I beheld, on emerging from the leafy shade, a beautiful lake, fed by a glistening river, which bounded in a foaming cascade, over a natural barrier into the bosom of the still water, disturbing its peacefulness, and imparting life and motion to its natural calmness. The calm lake was "still as the slumbers of a saint forgiven;" the cataract disturbed its surface as passing doubts and fears will ruffle the placid trustfulness of the most faithful and holy miud, yet serve only to strengthen its faith and make more manifest its "beauty of holiness."

Between the spot where I was standing and the lake was a verdant plain, studded with trees and copses, diversified by garden-land and shrubberies, and intersected in various directions by winding walks and scarcely defined paths. A similar landscape sloped down to the water on its further side. In divers attitudes of repose and activity were numerous groups of persons; some in conversation, some amusing themselves with athletic games; while occasionally from openings in the copses, or wandering up some unfrequented path, appeared single individuals, reading, or wrapt in contemplative thought.

I was now amongst the favoured inhabitants of The Muses' Elysium, where all who have done homage to the Muse on earth, are rewarded after death by conference with congenial minds. Here, thought I, the waudering spirit, while abiding its day of final doom, is permitted

to find temporary sojourn; provided it has duly qualified itself during life by a meritorious devotion to the Muse.

My attention was speedily fixed by an hilarious group of persons who were firing and receiving shots of wit with rapidity and force sufficient to sink any craft of less burden than their own.*

Anxious to join such excellent company, I addressed them; but to my disappointment, found that I was not yet qualified to partake in the happiness and enjoyments of this place. I was invisible and inaudible to the Elysians. This deprived me, indeed, of the pleasure of mutual converse, but it emboldened me to listen without fear of my presence interrupting the assembly, part of whose conversation I will endeavour to recall.

SCENE.-THE MUSES' ELYSIUM.

Time.—EVENING.

[Persons—Shakspere, Spenser, B. Jonson, Drayton, Drummond.— Chaucer in the distance, apparently in deep contemplation.]

Drum.—Yonder is "Dan Geoffrey," doing his daily service to the Daisy.

Dray.—'Tis strange so humble a flower should so absorb him.

Spens.—Without doubt he finds some deep "cloudie" meaning in that lowly flower, and sees matter which to our thoughts is unrevealed.

Shaks.—Methinks he recalls in its constancy and daily decoration of its mother earth in Spring and Autumn, Summer and Winter, the remembrance of some steadfast friend, whose memory he still delights to honour: nay, perhaps it is the only friendly face which never turned away when all human countenances were averted, and so in it he honours true friendship.

B. Jon.—I'll wager a cup of Canary that he takes it for a lady fair—Dan was their servant at sixty; and by my troth, love 's a malady not easily cured where it strikes deep.

^{* &}quot;Many were the wit-combats betwixt Shakspere and Ben Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war: Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning; solid, but slow in his performances. Shakspere, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."—FULLER'S WORTHIES.

Shaks.—I tell thee, Beu, Chancer is no writer of sonnets to a mistress's eye brow—your guess is nought.

B. Jon.—Will you take my wager?

Shaks.—'Twill be but to swill to your folly at your own charges.

B. Jon.—I give you back your words, and will swill (three pottle deep) to your folly at your own charges, if you encounter me.

Shaks .- Have at you man. When we have drained the bowl, we'll not

ask who pays.

B. Jon.—Nay, but the drawer will.

Shaks.—Not so; the drawer will ask first, lest he have you for a reekoner, and when his liquor's gone, find you not a ready one.

B. Jon.—A silly joke! But I eare not—he'll not reekon with me.

Spens.—To the proof. Dan is eoming hither; let's aeeost him and learn his deep meaning.

Drum.—Your brain so swells with allegory, that you would set all others seething with the like.

Spens.—Chaueer himself wrote eloudier matter, than pen of mine ere noted.

Shaks.—Ay, in his youth—wiser at sixty, he turned to nature and plain fact, and found more poetry there, than in the faney's fondest fictions.

[CHAUCER advances.]

B. Jon.—Ah Dan! thou eom'st in time to save us withings falling by the ears. Lend us one of thine to save ours, and listen to our thoughts.

Chau.—I will gladly save thee, and thee, and all of thee an ear-pulling, if I ean. Take both mine—so that ye stick them not in the pillory. How ean I serve ye?

Shaks.-We have referred to your decision, what you alone can decide-

but Drunmond shall speak for us.

B. Jon.—Hold! I'll not have Drummond. I like the man, but he likes not me. A late arrived ghost says he noted ill of me when I footed to his barren hills to salute him.

Drum.—A man may write his private thoughts for his private use. Blame fall on the fools who gave to the world what was written for the closet.

B. Jon.—What we note for ourselves, we note truly; what for the world, may or may not be our true thoughts. You do but the more prove your ill opinion.

Drum.—Yet is not ill opinion, ill will. I bear thee no malice. Nay, I love thee well. It is a friend's office to see a friend's faults. Whom we love not, we note not.

B. Jon.—A true friend sees no faults, still less finds them where they are not. I'll not have Drummond for spokesman, that's flat.

Chau.—I go, fare ye well! if I find you with sound heads and cool brains when I return, I'll talk to you. [Going.]

Spens .- And I go with you. I like not such tumult. [Going.]

Shaks.—Nay, prithee stay—here's Drayton; he'll tell our tale.

B. Jon.—Let Drayton speak.

Dray.—These worthies fain would know—and each has pledged his stakes on your answer—wherefore the venerable Chaucer daily does service to the humble Daisy? Shakspere opines, that it is in honour of a friend constant as itself; or thinks, mayhap, it is itself that only constant friend; while Jonson swears roundly, it is some lady's face that shines in its pearly circlet.

Chau.-And on my answer, what the stake?

Dray.—A cup of Canary.

Chau.—You do me wrong. 'Tis an unworthy task you put upon me, I

will not tell my thoughts to rule a drunken bout.

Shaks.—Nay, take it in good part; 'tis Jonson's bet. He knows no worthier pledge and does you honour with his best; and I, who fain would know your meanest thought, did take his wage. Believe me we meant it in all love and honour.

Chau.—My son, I do believe you, and crave pardon for my haste. Forego the bet and I will answer you.

Shaks .- 'Tis done.

B. Jon.—Be it so; for I would gladly hear your reason, though I lose my Canary.

Chau.—Console yourself that such loss is a gain; had your wage depended you would have paid forfeit. Shakspere nearer hits the mark than you;— I do love the Daisy for its constancy. When my honoured protector "old John of Gaunt, time-honour'd Lancaster" (I thank you [to Shaks.] for the worthy phrase), was no longer able to protect me; when friends, whom I had supported in their trouble, ungratefully abandoned me in mine,* and, in solitude and wretchedness, I wearily wasted away my best days, I turned to look somewhere for comfort and consolation; but I saw none but averted faces

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^{*} When Chaucer fled to Hainault to escape persecution for his Wieliffite opinions, he maintained some of his countrymen who had fled thither upon the same account, by sharing the money he had brought with him—an act of liberality which soon exhausted his stock. In the mean time, the partizans of his cause made their peace, not only without endeavouring to procure a pardon for him, but without aiding him in his exile, where he became greatly distressed for want of pecuniary supplies; and being compelled to return to England to see after his affairs, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower.

among a time-serving crowd, and casting daily my aching eyes on the earth, I daily beheld, sweetly smiling with a cheerful hopeful aspect, the pearly Daisy; it seemed to whisper hope, and to say, "See I smile through summer's sun and winter's storm, of each regardless; be not puffed up by prosperity, nor cast down by adversity." From the hour that I read this advice in its looks I have loved and honoured it as the only constant and true friend, ready by example, rather than by captious words or affected reproof, to avert melancholy, and inspire energy and hope.

Therefore, my son [to Shahs.], you, who above all others have read the human mind truly and deeply, have guessed my thoughts aright; now let me aim at yours. You loved the Violet because in it you saw a congenial lover of retirement whose odour yet ascended and told the passenger that a hidden

swectness lurked among the leaves.

Shaks.—'Tis true; I did love the Violet for its love of a not useless retirement. I saw how, unseen and unnoticed, it afforded gratification and pleasure to the air around it, and thus learnt to make seclusion from the bustling world useful and gratifying to it.*

Spens.—And yet methinks the bustling world is most fitting for the active

mind. I never much loved the retirement you admire.

Drum .- You did not fairly try it.

Shaks.—No; the barbarous horrors of wild Irish life ill supplied the calm abode and quiet scenes in which the sons of the Muse delight. Moreover the gay pleasures of the court of our princely Queen were an ill preparative for the trials of seclusion.

Spens.—'Tis too true. The horrors of that life are ever engraven on the heart of a bereaved parent. Who can forget that he saw his home made the funcral pile of his child?

Drum.—Let's leave these thoughts which savour too much of earth. Come—let those who will, pluck from this shady bank a Violet for Shaksperc, and those who do affect with Chaucer the Daisy, let them choose one from you open launde.—I pluck a Violet.

Dray.—And I a Daisy.

Spens.—And I a Violet; how Ben, what sayst thou?

B. Jon .- An I break my back stooping to such foolery, I'll wear ass's

^{*} At the early age of forty-eight, Shakspere retired to Stratford to spend the remainder of his days; but still continued to issue, for the admiration and delight of all ages, some of the finest of his dramas.

⁺ During the rebellion of the Earl of Desmond, in 1597, Spenser's castle at Kilcolman, in Ireland, was burnt to the ground, and one of his children perished in the flames.

ears the rest o' my days and like Midas be a listener and noter down of other men's follies. Drummond does well not to pluck a Daisy, 'twould become a stinging-nettle in his hands to see true friendship so abused.

Drum.—You wrong me by my faith. Come join our silly sport and fool it

with us.

B. Jon.—I'll none of it.—There's no flower to my thought like Sweet Sopsin-wine—it sounds of the wassail and the bowl—the only true friend, if so be you use him gently; ride not a willing horse too hard lest he kick and throw you; stick to my "Leges Conviviales," and no man need fear a fall.*

Here a pause occurred in the conversation, and my attention was arrested by two individuals reclining on a bank, purple with Violets, amidst which Primroses peeped out like stars in the blue firmament.

The similarity of their countenances told me that they were brothers. When I had neared them, I perceived in the amiability and piety of their thoughts, and the mutual cordiality of their manners that I was looking upon the brothers Phineas and Giles Fletcher. The former was plucking the Primroses and pulling them to pieces, explaining to his brother the uses of their various parts; to which Giles responded by praises of their beauty, and of the wisdom and goodness of the Deity who had perfected the meanest herb which grows.

Being desirous to take part in their conversation, and learn somewhat of the more serious thoughts and occupations of the Elysians, I addressed myself to them, forgetting that to their senses I was invisible and inaudible. Vexed at my inability to arouse their notice, and provoked at their imperturbability, I made a final effort to make myself heard;—the effort broke the charm—my dream had vanished; and cold and shivering, I was glad to retire to my dormitory.

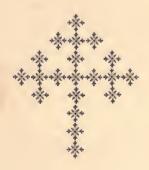
My lengthened nap had interfered with my usual rest, and my mind, excited by the remembrance of the dream, refused to allow me further repose. I lay thinking on what I had seen and heard in the land of dreams; and, joining in the interest of the choices of Chaucer and

^{*} B. Jonson wrote laws for the regulation of his club, held in the Apollo of the Old Devil Tavern; in which he sanctions only moderation in wine. The following are laws xi. and xii.:—

[&]quot;Moderatis poculis provocare sodales fas esto.
At fabulis magis quam vino velitatio fiat."

Shakspere, I felt anxious to ascertain to which of the flowers favoured by them the most suffrages had been given by the great body of their brother Poets.

I determined, therefore, at the first leisure opportunity, to collect the various passages in which the Poets had celebrated the Daisy and the Violet. In the task I met with many other flowers which claimed a right to be called "the poets' favourites." These, too, I collected; and finally, the result was the nucleus of the present work; which I was subsequently induced to extend, in hopes that my labours might be subservient to the pleasure of others.





Division K.

*

1380 to 1570.



"Thou know'st the sweetness by antique song, Breathed o'er the names of that flowery throng; The Woodbine, the Primrose, the Violet dim, The Lily that gleams by the fountain's brim; These are old words that have made each grove A dreaming haunt for romance and love."

MRS. HEMANS.

our wanderings through the Poets' Flower Garden, it will greatly enhance our appreciation of its beauties if we proceed with some degree of system; and, examining each border separately, consider it with reference to its cultivators and the period in which it was laid out. The metaphor here used is the more just and suitable, because at the close of our ramble, we shall not fail to be struck with the resemblance which the Poets' Garden bears to the system of horticulture, peculiar to the period in which the productions of Flora were described. Thus in the earliest period of English poetry, the garden was little attended to, its exotic productions were few, and those few confined to the demesne of the monarch, the pleasaunce of the princely baron, or the garden of the lordly priest. To these scenes of peace and pleasantness, in the midst of a world of strife and bloodshed, wild Nature's "cultureless buds" were often transferred; some being esteemed for their beauty, some for their perfume, and others for their medicinal or healing virtues. These gave to the garden of our early ancestors a

half-wild aspect: there flourished the trained woodbine around the arbour formed of eglantine;

"Many a thousand Daisie red as rose And white also,"

of colours varied by the hand of cultivation, sprang amidst double Violets, and divers-coloured Primroses; while limes and alders, elms and oaks, lent the shade necessary to protect the tender flowers from the heat of the sun, or the blasts of winter. Of gardens so planted with Nature's untainted works, and so protected by our native trees, Geoffrey Chaucer furnishes several illustrations:—

"The soil was plaine, smooth, and wonder soft All overspread with tapettes that Nature Had made herself: covered eke aloft With boughes green, the flowers for to cure, That in their beauty they may long endure From all assault of Phœbus, fervent fere, Which in his sphere so hote shone and elere."

In another of his works he gives a beautiful description of a garden, just recovering from the poverty of winter:—

" A flowry green Full thick of grasse, full soft and sweet. With floures fele faire under feet. And little used, it seemed thus: For both Flora and Zephyrus, They two, that make floures grow, Had made their dwelling there I trow; For it was one to behold. As though the earth envy wold To be gayer than the heaven, To have mo' floures such seven, As in the welkin starès be. It had forgot the poverty That winter, through his cold morrowes, Had made it suffer, and his sorrowes. All was forgotten, and that was seen, For all the wood was woxen green: Sweetness of dewe had made it wax."

The striking characteristic of Chaucer's descriptions of flowers, is the intense warmth of feeling with which he seems to regard them. We can hardly realize to ourselves an old man of sixty years of age, entering so deeply into the beauties of a garden, as he appears to do, in the following lines; notwithstanding that they exhibit the truth, which youth indeed is unwilling to admit, but which experienced age knows but too well, that no external pleasures can wholly lighten the heart, if oppressed by great sickness or sorrow:—

"May had painted with his soft showers
This garden full of leaves and of flowres:
And craft of mannis hand so curiously
Arrayed had this garden trewely,
That never was there garden of such price,
But if it were the very Paradise.
The odour of flowres, and the freshe sight
Would have ymaked any hearte light
That ever was born, but if too great sickness,
Or too great sorrow held it in distress;
So full it was of beauty and pleasance."

See too how he revels and luxuriates in the "joly month of May!"

"And Zephyrus, and Flora gentelly,
Gave to the flowres soft and tenderly,
Their sweet breath, and made them for to spread,
As god and goddess of the flowry mead;
I' which me thought I mightè day by day,
Dwellen alway, the joly month of May,
Withouten sleep, withouten meat or drink."

From John Skelton's little canzonet, we learn that the ancient fashion of praising a mistress under the semblance of a flower was not obsolete in his day:—

"She is the Violet,
The Daisy delectable,
The Columbine commendable,
This Jelofer amiable,
This most goodly flowre,

This blossom of fresh colour, So Jupiter me succour, She florysheth new and new In beauty and vertue."

James I. in like manner celebrates his mistress as

"The flower Jonetts,"

(probably the Jonquil,) because of her name Janetta or Janet.

Chaucer furnished his successors with descriptions of spring, and lamentations for the forlorn condition in which winter had left the tender crops; but beyond these imitations we find nothing among English writers available to our pages, until the time of Surrey. If, therefore, between the death of Chaucer and the Spenserian age, we would find any original descriptions of flowers, we must seek them among the poets of the North, which witnessed the birth of a Dunbar and a Douglas, while England's Muse was almost silent.

WILLIAM DUNBAR thus graphically represents the flowery May:—

"In bed at morrow, sleeping as I lay;

Methought fresh May before my bed up stood,
In weed depaint of many diverse hue,
Sober, benign, and full of mansuctude,
In bright attire of flowers forged new,
Heavenly of colour, white, red, brown, and blue,
Balmèd in dew, and gilt with Phœbus' beamès,
While all the house illumynit of her lemys."

GAWIN DOUGLAS likewise, like all the early poets, celebrates the season of May:—

"In May I raise to do my observance,
And entered in a garden of pleasance,
With Sol depaint, as Paradise amiable
And blissful boughes with bloomed varyance.
So craftily Dame Flora had overfret
Her heavenly bed, powdered with many a set
Of ruby, topas, pearl, and emerant,
With balmy dew, bathed and kindly wet."

Douglas gives a general and particular description of various flowers which may well find a place here, though somewhat modernized in orthography, without which it would not be easily understood:—

"The blooming hawthorn clad his prickles all; Full of fresh sproutings the wine-grapes young, Along the trellis did on twistis hang: The peeping buttons on the budded trees Overspreading leaves of Nature's tapestries, Soft grassy verdure, after balmy showers, On curling stalks smiling to their flowers, Beholding them so many divers hue; Some azure, some pale, some brownish, and some blue, Some grey, some gules, some purple, some sanguine, Blanched or brown, reddish yellow many one, Some heavenly coloured in celestial grey, Some wat'ry hewed as the high wavy sea, And some depaint in freckles red and white, Some bright as gold with aureate leaves of light. The daisy did unbraid her crownal small, And every flower unlapped in the dale; In battle-bearing blossoms, the thistle wild, The clover, trefoil, and the camomilde, The flour-de-luce forth spread his heavenly hue; Rose damask and columbine black and blue; Sere downies small on dande-lion sprang The young green bloomed strawberry leaves among; Gay gilliflowers thereon leavis unshut: Fresh primrose and the purple violet; The rose buds putting forth their head 'Gan burst and kiss their vermeil lippis red; Curled scarlet leaves, some shedding both at once, Raised fragrant smell a'midst from golden grains; Heavenly lilies with curling toppis white, Opened and shew their crestis redemyte, The balmy vapour from their silken crops Distilling wholesome sugared honey-drops; And silver dew-drops 'gan from leavis hang, With crystal spangles on the verdure young; So that each blossom, scion, herb, or flower Wax'd all embalmed of the fresh liquor."

Of the amatory poets of the reign of Henry VIII., Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, and the Earl of Surrey alone survive; but the former was in his poetry merely a lover, and had scarcely a thought beyond a lover's hopes and fears. The Earl of Surrey's inclinations also led him to adore the blaze of courtly beauty, yet he did not wholly forget the sweet season of spring: and when he contrasts its annual return with his own hopeless state as a lover, he does not omit (like later poets) to place flowers among the appropriate images of its recurrence:—

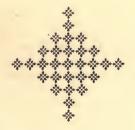
"The sweet season that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale;
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle to her mate hath told her tale:
Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale;
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings;
The fishes flete with new-repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she flings;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies small;
The busy bee her honey now she mynges;
Winter is worne that was the flowers' bale—
And thus I see among these pleasant things,
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs"

THOMAS SACKVILLE Lord BUCKHURST stands intermediate between Surrey and Spenser. As a poet, he belongs rather to the reign of Mary than Elizabeth. His description of a winter's evening displays great accuracy of detail, and his regret "to see the summer flowers forlorn by winter's blasts," evinces that it is possible to combine a close and attentive study of the passions of the heart, with a keen sense of the beauties of Nature:

"The wrathful Winter 'proaching on a pace,
With blustring blasts had all ybared the treen,
And old Saturnus, with his frosty face,
With chilling cold had pierced the tender green:
The mantels rent wherein enwrapped been
The gladsome groves that now lay overthrown,
The tapets torn, and every bloom down blown.

The soil that erst so seemly was to seen,
Was all despoiled of her beauty's hue:
And sweet fresh flowers (wherewith the Summer's queen
Had clad the earth) now Boreas' blasts down blew;
And small fowls flocking, in their song did rue
The Winter's wrath, wherewith each thing defaced
In woful wise bewailed the Summer past.

And sorrowing I to see the Summer flowers,
The lively green, the lusty leas forlorn,
The sturdy trees so shattered with the showers,
The fields so fade that flourish'd so beforne—
It taught me well all earthly things be born
To dye the death, for nought long time may last;
The Summer's beauty yields to Winter's blast."





Division III.

*

1570 to 1640.

9

"Who now a posie pins not in his cap,
And not a garland baldrick-wise doth wear?
Some, of such flowers as to his hand doth hap;
Others, such as a secret meaning bear."

DRAYTON.

country and allusions to flowers. Nor are these mere poetical imaginings; on the contrary, they bear the stamp and impress of actual observation under the open canopy of heaven; they are evidently studies from Nature, and silently conjure up to the mind some almost forgotten spot, some

" Bank whereon the wild thyme grows,"

or where the primrose shines out from amidst a firmament of violets. These descriptions, too, however often repeated, have all the novelty and freshness of Nature. We should as soon tire of the recurrence of spring, a garden of roses, or the landscape of a Claude, as of the brilliant etchings and vignettes from Nature, with which the poetry of this period is so beautifully illuminated and adorned.

The peculiarity which strikes the reader in the floral poetry of this period, is the immense profusion of flowers which are chronicled in a single page, and the accurate epithets by which they are concisely described. In this respect, it resembles the mixed border of a garden,

where flowers of every variety of colour, form, and size are mingled in gorgeous confusion; and the beauty of which consists in masses of colour judiciously disposed, rather than in the distinct loveliness or perfection of its individual plants.

The descriptions of garlands, bauldricks, anadems, and crowns of flowers, each of which had its distinctive use, carry us back to a time when the mystery of weaving them was understood, and when it was considered no shame to waste the hours under the greenwood tree, or in plucking materials to crown a May queen.

The earlier poets scattered flowers amongst their poetry, as Nature herself does in the open field; sometimes singly, sometimes in masses; but always so as to form a part only of the beauty of the scene. Even as in the wilds of Nature, no spot blooms without a flower or "weed of glorious feature;" so, in the descriptions of such scenes, the poets who had studied Nature, never omitted to introduce her favourite decorations. On the other hand, as Nature never plants flowers but as adjuncts to other beauties, so those poets never pluck and place them as it were in a "flower-holder" for exclusive delight. It is not until the latter part of this period, when a more metaphysical style of thought was beginning to supersede the unsophisticated love of Nature which signalizes the earlier poets, that any entire pieces addressed to flowers are met with. Donne, who has been classed as the first of the metaphysical school of poets, and Herrick, whose strong attachment to country life was considerably affected by the style of the period, are the first poets who dedicated distinct verses to individual flowers. Donne's lines "To the Primrose," and "To Blossoms," cannot boast of much beauty; but Herrick's "To the Primrose" and other flowers, have never been surpassed in sweetness and refined delicacy of sentiment. Mournful as is their general character, it is that happy sadness which imparts pleasure, and on which the well organized mind fears not, nay, rather feels it a duty, occasionally to dwell.

Commencing this period with the works of EDMUND SPENSER, we soon perceive that he was a very close and accurate observer of flowers; for his felicitous epithets evince an intimate acquaintance with their habits and properties. Luxuriating in metaphor, he terms flowers "the Fields' Honour" and "the Children of the Spring;" and his intense love for them is strongly manifested in the pretty episode of "Muiopotmos,

or the Fate of the Butterfly," whose flower-sipping propensities he rapturously envies:—

"What more felicitie can fall to creature,
Than to enjoy delight with liberty,
And to be lord of all the works of Nature,
To reign in the air from earth to highest sky,
To feed on flowers and weeds of glorious feature,
To take whatever thing doth please the eye?
Who rests not pleased with such happiness,
Well worthy he to taste of wretchedness."

Spenser has several allegorical personations of Spring, of whom flowers are appropriately made the distinguishing costume:—

"Fresh Spring, the herald of love's mightic king, In whose coat armour richly are displayed All sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring, In goodly colours gloriously array'd."

And again-

"Lusty Spring, all dight in leaves of floures,
That freshly budded and new bloosmes did bear
(In which a thousand birds had built their boures
That sweetly sung, to call forth paramours):
And in his hand a javelin he did bear,
And on his head (as fit for warlike stoures)
A gilt engraven morion he did wear;
That as some did him love, so others did him fear."

In the following lines we have a striking example of that felicity in bestowing epithets, which, as we have said, proclaims Spenser's intimate acquaintance with the character, habits, and properties of the individuals of the floral kingdom:—

"The rose engrained in pure scarlet die,
The lilly fresh, and violet belowe,
The marigold, and cheerful rosemarie,
The Spartan myrtle, whence sweet gum does flowe,
The purple hyacinth, and fresh costmarie,
And saffron sought for in Cilician soil,
And laurell th' ornament of Phæbus' toil.

"Fresh rhododaphne, and the Sabine floure
Matching the wealth of th' ancient frankincence,
And pallid ivie building his own boure,
And box yet mindful of his old offence,
Red amaranthus, lucklesse paramour,
Ox eye still green, and bitter patience;
Ne wants there pale narcisse, that in a well
Seeing his beautie, in love with it fell."

Henry Constable furnishes the first specimen of a style of amatory verse, which, a century after, became the staple of which all floral poetry was composed:—

"My lady's presence makes the roses red,
Because to see her lips they blush for shame;
The lilies' leaves (for envy) pale became,
And her white hands in them this envy bred.
The marigold the leaves abroad doth spread,
Because the sun's, and her power is the same;
The violet of purple colour came,
Dy'd in the blood she made my heart to shed.
In brief, all flowers from her their virtue take;
From her sweet breath, their sweet smells do proceed;
'The living heat which her eyebeams do make,
Warmeth the ground, and quickeneth the seed;
The rain wherewith she watereth the flowers,
Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers."

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE. Often as Shakspere avails himself of flowers as illustrations, he comparatively seldom uses the generic term, flower. He was sufficiently well acquainted with their habits, to apply them specifically. Most other writers when using them as metaphors or similes, hide their limited knowledge in vague generalities, lest the illustration should fail; while the generic term "flower" will safely apply, and it is hard if the reader cannot find some one which will bear out the intended meaning. Shakspere's profound knowledge of Nature, relieves us from the necessity of adducing many extracts in this place, and the principal of his floral passages will be found in the subsequent chapters on individual flowers.

In several instances he alludes to the pious and lovely custom of strewing the graves of departed friends with flowers. Even were the custom not beautiful and poetical in itself, his language would make it so, and be alone sufficient to induce and sanction its revival.

Arviragus : ---

"With fairest flowers,
Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor
The azured hare-bell, like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Out-sweeten'd not thy breath:—the ruddock would,
With charitable bill (O bill, sore-shaming
Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie
Without a monument!) bring thee all this;
Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse."

Belarius :-

"Here's a few flowers; but about midnight, more:
The herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
Are strewings fitt'st for graves.—Upon their faces:—
You were as flowers; now wither'd; even so
These herb'lets shall, which we upon you strow."

So likewise on the grave of the divinely-souled Ophelia:-

"Sweets to the sweet. Farewell!

I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,

And not t' have strewed thy grave."

Shakspere does not condescend to the quaint fancies which gave rise to a Language of Flowers; instead of making them the vehicles of human passion, he with infinitely more propriety and judgment assigns them to the fairies, as a medium of correspondence in lieu of writing:—

"Fairies use flowers for their charactery."

What a vivid idea does this single line convey, both of the loveliness and etheriality of his fairies, and his appreciation of the delicacy and purity of flowers! MICHAEL DRAYTON furnishes many passages descriptive of flowers. One of the most beautiful and characteristic allegories in his voluminous Polyolbion, is the narrative of the marriage of the Tame and the Isis, whose respective decorative garlands he describes at great length. "In the garlands of the Tame (it is added in a note) are wreathed most of our English field-flowers; in those of Isis our more sweet, and those of the garden;" but as the greater part of these descriptions will be found interspersed in subsequent pages, we omit them here, and can only make room for two short extracts, displaying much delicacy of fancy. The first describes a bank, "rich with the enamelled bravery of the beauteous Spring:"—

"An easy bank near to this place there was, A seat fair Flora used to sit upon, Curling her clear locks, in this liquid glass, Putting her rich gems and attirings on."

The second, a lover's wish, presents a beautiful contrast both to the brutal desire of Caligula, and the sensual one of Byron:—*

"Oh that the sweets of all the flowers that grow
The labouring air would gather into one,
In gardens, fields, nor meadows leaving none,
And all their sweetness upon thee would throw."

Ben Jonson, although born and resident nearly his whole life in London, was, like the best poets of his time, a lover of flowers; and dedicated one of his Masques to their goddess, under the title of "Chloridia," from Chloris, the Greek name of Flora.

The list of flowers, with which he describes the Shepherds directing the Nymphs to strew the ground on "Pan's Anniversary," is worthy the attention of the practical florist; it would almost furnish a moderate-sized garden:—

"Well done, my pretty ones, rain roses still, Uutil the last be dropt: then hence; and fill Your fragrant prickles for a second shower. Bring corn-flag, tulips, and Adonis' flower,

^{*} Caligula's wish that all mankind had but one head, that he might cut it off at one blow, is well known: no less so is Byron's, that all womankind had "one rosy mouth, and I might kiss it."

Fair ox-eye, goldy-locks, and columbine, Pinks, goulands, king-cups, and sweet sops-in-wine, Blue hare-bells, pagles, pansies, calaminth, Flower-gentle, and the fair-hair'd hyaeinth: Bring rich carnations, flower-de-luces, lilies, The chequed and purple-ringed daffodillies, Bright crown imperial, kingspear, hollyhocks, Sweet Venus-navel, and soft lady-smocks: Bring, too, some branches forth of Daphne's hair, And gladdest myrtle for these posts to wear, With spikenard weaved and marjoram between, And starr'd with yellow-gold and meadows-queen-That when the altar, as it ought, is drest, More odour come not from the Phænix' nest: The breath thercof Panchaia might cnvy, The colours China, and the light the sky."

RICHARD BARNFIELD, like many of his contemporaries, chronicles various flowers:---

"There grows the gilliflowre, the mint, the daisy
Both rcd and white, the blue-vein'd violet;
The purple hyacinth, the spyke to please thee,
The scarlet dy'd carnation bleeding yet:
The sage, the savory, and sweet marjoram,
Hyssop, thyme, and eye-bright, good for the blind and dumb.

The pink, the primrose, cowslip, and daffodilly,
The harebell blue, the crimson columbine,
Sage, lettuce, parsley, and the milk-white lily,
The rose and speckled flower called sops-in-winc,
Fine pretty king-cups, and the yellow bootes,
That grows by rivers and by shallow brooks."

Phineas Fletcher quaintly describes various flowers:—

"The hedge, green satin pink'd and cut, arrays;
The heliotrope unto cloth of gold aspires;
In hundred-color'd silks the tulip plays;
Th' imperial flower, his neck with pearl attires;
The lily, high her silver grogram rears;
The pansy, her wrought velvet garment bears;
The red rose, searlet, and the provence, damask wears."

His brother, GILES FLETCHER, has a curious description of a garden in which the taste for strange devices of animals, temples, &c., cut in the trees, or figured in borders, which was then beginning to prevail, is exhibited:—

"The garden like a lady fair was cut,
That lay as if she slumber'd in delight,
And to the open skies her eyes did shut;
The azure fields of heaven were 'sembled right
In a large round, set with the flowers of light:
The flow'rs-de-luce, and the round sparks of dew,
That hung upon their azure leaves, did shew
Like twinkling stars, that sparkle in the evening blue.

Upon a hilly bank her head she cast,
On which the bower of vain-delight was built,
White and red roses for her face were plac'd,
And for her tresses marigolds were spilt;
Them broadly she display'd, like flaming gilt,
Till in the ocean the glad day were drown'd:
Then up again her yellow locks she wound,
And with green fillets in their pretty cauls them bound."

Thomas Carew, who was one of the earliest, as he was one of the best, of a tribe of amorous poets, abounding in indelicacies and frigid conceits, gives us the following characteristic specimen of his style:—

THE INQUIRY.

"Amongst the myrtles as I walk'd, Love and my sighs thus intertalk'd: 'Tell me,' said I, in deep distress, 'Where I may find my shepherdess?'

'Thou fool,' said Love, 'knows't thou not this, In every thing that's good she is? In yonder tulip go and seek, There thou may'st find her lip, her cheek:

'In you enamel'd pansy by,
There thou shal't have her curious eye;
In bloom of peach, in rosy bud,
There wave the streamers of her blood.

'In brightest lilies that there stand,
The emblems of her whiter hand:
In yonder rising hill there smell
Such sweets as in her bosom dwell.'

"Tis true," said I—and thereupon I went to pluck them one by one, To make of parts a union— But on a sudden all was gone.

With that I stopt: said Love, 'These be, Fond man, resemblances of thee: And, as these flowers, thy joys shall die, Ev'n in the twinkling of an eye: And all thy hopes of her shall wither, Like these short sweets thus knit together.'"

WILLIAM BROWNE was a purely pastoral and descriptive poet. There is a simplicity and natural truthfulness in his descriptions of still life, which remind one of the pictures of Gainsborough. Browne wrote all his poetry in early youth, when the heart feels with warmth, and when "the least thing that grows"

"Can more infuse Than all Nature's beauties can In some other wiser man."

WITHER.

The wiser man—the child of this world—is blinded by his wisdom; he beholds Nature "through a glass darkly, and not face to face;" he would fain "unweave a rainbow;" and, unmindful of its beauty, or the awful sublimity of the event which the Bible teaches us to annex to its appearance, he delights to expatiate on its physical causes, and is learned on refraction of light. Browne's poetry abounds in flowers, and he gives a more copious account of their "Language" than any other poet. This language—lately revived, and alleged to be derived from the East—was quite as familiar to our rural ancestors, as it is to the beauty of the harem; and the study of our old poets would furnish as good a dictionary to the language, as a knowledge of the Eastern interpretations. Browne's explanations of the meanings of flowers will be

found scattered through subsequent pages: but we may introduce here a anciful and elegant description of a bouquet:—

"As in a rainbow's many color'd hue, Here see we watchet * deepen'd with a blue, There a dark tawny with a purple mix'd. Yellow and flame, with streaks of green betwixt, A bloody stream into a blushing run. And ends still with the colour which begun, Drawing the deeper to a lighter stain, Bringing the lightest to the deep'st again: With such rare art each mingleth with his fellow, The blue with watchet, green and red with yellow; Like to the changes which we daily see Around the dove's neck with variety, Where none can say (though he it strict attends) Here one begins, and there the other ends: So did the maidens with their various flowers Deck up their windows and make neat their bowers; Using such cunning as they did dispose The ruddy pi'ny with the lighter rose, The monkshood with the bugloss, and entwine The white, the blue, the flesh-like columbine With pinks, sweet-williams; that far off the eye Could not the manner of their mixtures spy."

No poet gives such free reins to his imagination, when on the subject of flowers, as Robert Herrick, who, in "the argument of his book," tells us:

"I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds and bowers,
Of April, May, of June, and July-flowers;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.

* * * * * * * * * *

I sing of times trans-shifting; and I write How roses first came red, and lilies white."

Beautiful as are many of his well-known songs on flowers, he has too many in the following strain:—

^{*} Light blue.

WHY FLOWERS CHANGE COLOUR.

"These fresh beauties we can prove Once were virgins sick of love. Turn'd to flowers, still in some Colours go and colours come."

From Henry Peacham we select a stanza, the character of which, being more in accordance with the style of the early Elizabethan poets than of those of the next period, induces us to place it here; as the dates of his birth and writings are matters of dispute among the learned:—

"Nor prinees' riehest arras may compare
With some small spot where Nature's skill is shown,
Perfuming sweetly all the neighbour air,
While thousand colours in a night are blown:
Here's a light crimson; there a deeper one;
A maiden's blush; here purples; there a white;
Then all commingled for our more delight."

George Herbert, a religious poet, who has not yet lost his popularity, gathers the usual instruction from flowers:—

LIFE.

"I made a posy, while the day ran by:

Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie

My life within this band.

But time did beekon to the flowers, and they

By noon most cunningly did steal away,

And wither'd in my hand.

My hand was next to them, and then my heart; I took, without more thinking, in good part
Time's gentle admonition:
Who did so sweetly death's sad taste convey,
Making my mind to smell my fatal day;
Yet sug'ring the suspicion.

Farewell, dear flowers, sweetly your time ye spent,
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament,
And, after death, for eures.
I follow straight without complaint or grief;
Since, if my seent be good, I eare not if
It be as short as yours."

Division III.



1640 to 1725.



"Where Nature has to Art resign'd, Till all looks mean, stiff, and confin'd."

ALLAN RAMSAY.

MILTON.

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens—majestic, free."
WORDSWORTH.

for any heartfelt descriptions of Nature's works; indeed, they seem almost excluded: and if to this absence is added the neglect into which the writers of the previous period fell, it must be inferred that external Nature was not considered to yield fit subjects for the Muse. Hence Floral Poetry languished; and poor and worthless are the few instances in which flowers are introduced. Sometimes we are favoured with lines expatiating on the flowers of a lady's embroidery, or even of her carpet, as outvying Flora's best productions: or we are told that, save in her presence, the flowers neglect to grow, or yield perfume. But the favourite subject is a "Rose-bud in a lady's bosom;" and the fair one is reminded of the fleetness of beauty by the brief existence of the flower—a stale idea, which is repeated and harped upon ad nauseam.

Cowley's "Ode on Solitude,"—which has found admirers in our own day, and has been selected by his eulogist, Campbell, as a specimen of his beauties—is so apt an example of the contempt in which Nature's works were held, that we cannot do better than quote a part of it. It will be noticed how Cowley labours to denaturalize natural scenery, and racks his invention to convert the beauties of the wood into the appurtenances of a city:—

"Hail, old Patrician trees, so great and good! Hail ye Plebeian underwood! Where the poetic birds rejoice. And for their quiet nests and plenteous food Pay with their grateful voice. Hail the pure Muses' richest manor seat! Here Nature does for me a house erect. Nature, the fairest architect. Who those fond artists does despise That ean the fair and living trees neglect, Yet the dead timber prize. Here the soft winds above me flying, With all their wanton boughs dispute. : 15 A silver stream shall roll his waters near. Gilt with the sunbeams here and there."

Now what can be more absurd, in a description of a secluded wood, than to designate the trees patricians, and the underwoods plebeians; to degrade the birds into poets, earning a precarious food by their songs, while the wood itself is converted into a house; Nature into a bricklayer; the winds into scholastic disputants; and the stream into silver, gilt "here and there," like a parcel-gilt goblet?

In fact, the solitude, which Cowley pretended to eulogize, was possessed, yet hated by him. Dwelling in the country, he despised its pursuits, sighed for the occupations of the town, and was alive to no beauty save in the streets of the capital. Faint indeed must have been his appreciation of the uses and enjoyments of rural life, when he considered his residence in the country as equivalent to death and burial, and wrote "An Epitaph upon

himself yet alive, but withdrawn from the busy world to a country life, to be supposed written on his house."

Even his admiration of the flowers of "the Garden," springs not from a sense of their intrinsic beauty, but only from their contrast to the dirt and smoke of the city. Had he really loved the productions of the garden, he would have contrasted them with the choicest pleasures, and not with the annoyances of the "populous town:"—

"Who, that has reason and his smell,
Would not among roses and jasmine dwell,
Rather than all his spirits choke
With exhalations of dirt and smoke,
And all th' uncleanness which does drown,
In pestilential clouds, a populous town?"

Cowley was admired, beloved, and imitated more than any other poet, until the time of Pope; and when the master of the school set the example of degrading Nature and her works, what can we require from the pupils? What can we expect from the age which crowned Cowley as its master spirit, and so disregarded Milton, as to leave it matter for discussion whether or not his sublime genius were in any degree appreciated? We cannot say, therefore, that disappointment is the lot of him who searches the poetry of this period for natural beauties, for he has the portion of the blessed who expecteth nothing; and the reader will at once understand why our selections from "the Augustan age" of poetry are so few, and those few so poor. Cowley, Dryden, Swift, and other contemporary names of notoriety, were like the thorny ground on which the seed fell, and was choked when the thorns sprung up. The exposition of the parable equally applies here, for those thorns were "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches," whose baneful influence prostituted the Muse, and made her the vehicle of the most servile adulation, and the most debasing obscenity. The poetry of the period consisted almost exclusively of flattering addresses, and disgusting satires; occasionally varied by Pastorals, redolent of everything but pastoral life, and consisting of Dialogues between Delia and Corydon, Thyrsis and Chloe, lauding, abusing, and lamenting their loves, with an oft-repeated allusion to "sheep"—the only natural objects which appear to have been thought necessary to constitute "Pastorals."

EDMUND WALLER was celebrated for the smoothness of his verse. The following plea of a lover for inconstancy is a pretty sample of that quality:—

"Sweetest! you know, the sweetest of things
Of various flowers the bees compose;
Yet no particular taste it brings
Of violet, woodbine, pink, or rose:
So love the result is of all the graces
Which flow from a thousand several faces."

Andrew Marvell, though little known as a poet, deserves to be classed with his friend Milton, rather than with the herd of "wits of either Charles's days;" and we are glad to have an opportunity of selecting from his poems a description of a "Dial of Flowers," which it would appear, he had seen actually constructed long before Linnæus propounded the same idea:—

"How well the skilful gard'ner drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers?"

As an illustration of the most usual mode of introducing flowers into the poetry of this period, we give the following lines of Thomas Tickell, instead of wearying the reader's patience with some score of similar mediocre verses:—

TO A LADY WITH A PRESENT OF FLOWERS.

"The fragrant painting of our flowery fields,
The choicest stores that youthful Summer yields,
Strephon to fair Eliza hath convey'd,
The sweetest garland to the sweetest maid.
O cheer the flowers, my fair, and let them rest
On the Elysium of thy snowy breast,

And there regale the smell, and charm the view, With richer odours, and a lovelier hue!

Learn hence, nor fear a flatterer in the flower,
Thy form divine, and beauty's matchless power;
Faint, near thy cheeks, the bright carnation glows,
And thy ripe lips out-blush the opening rose:
The lily's snow betrays less pure a light,
Lost in thy bosom's more unsullied white;
And wreaths of jasmine shed perfumes beneath
Th' ambrosial incense of thy balmy breath.

Ten thousand beauties grace the rival pair, How fair the chaplet, and the nymph how fair! But ah! too soon these fleeting charms decay, The fading lustre of one hastening day, This night shall see the gaudy wreath decline, The roses wither, and the lilies pine.

The garland's fate to thee shall be applied, And what advance thy form, shall check thy pride: Be wise, my fair, the present hour improve, Let joy be now, and now a waste of love; Each drooping bloom shall plead thy just excuse, And that which shew'd thy beauty, shew its use."

John Milton is one of those names which refuse to be placed in the same category with those with which they may happen to be associated in date, and demand to stand first in the rolls of fame, without regard to rules and formularies. Appearing as he did, in an age whose taste was depraved, he stands in the midst of it as a noble "stag of ten" amid a herd of fallow-deer grazing the same pasture; and, though necessarily placed among those writers with whom he was contemporaneous, our remarks on the Floral Poetry of this period must not be supposed to apply to that by the almost inspired author of the finest epic in the world.

It has, indeed, been truly remarked, that Milton is not always correct in his descriptions of flowers, either in their characters or their times of blooming; but that he appreciated their loveliness, and acknowledged their influence on the affections, is proved by the fact, that

he made Eve's last lamentation, on her expulsion from Paradise, an exquisitely pathetic address to her flowers:—

"O unexpected stroke, worse than of death! Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades, Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend, Quiet, tho' sad, the respite of that day That must be mortal to us both.—O flowers! That never will in other elimate grow, My early visitation, and my last At even, which I bred up with tender hand, From the first opening bud, and gave ye names; Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount? Thee lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorned, With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee How shall I part?"

DESCRIPTION OF PARADISE.

" The erispid brooks, Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold, With mazy error under pendent shades, Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed Flowers worthy of Paradise; which not nice Art, In beds and eurious knots, but Nature boon Pour'd forth profuse, on hill, and dale, and plain; Both where the morning sun first warmly smote The open field, and where the unpierced shade Imbrown'd the noontide bowers. Thus was this place A happy rural seat of various view; Groves, whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm; Others, whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind, Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, If true, here only, and of delicious taste: Betwixt them, lawns or level downs, and flocks Grazing the tender herb, were interposed; Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap Of some irriguous valley spread her store; Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose."

EVE'S NUPTIAL BOWER.

"Thus talking, hand in hand alone, they pass'd
On to their blissful bower; it was a place
Chosen by the Sovereign Planter, when he framed
All things to man's delightful use; the roof,
Of thickest covert, was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

*

* * Here in close recess, With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs, Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed."

Allan Ramsay is a name which we approach with feelings akin to those with which the traveller through the desert approaches the springs, which are to slake his thirst and refresh his wearied steeds.

Since the commencement of this period, our journey has been through a barren unprofitable waste (which, however, we have spared the reader from traversing with us), on whose spacious face scarce a flower grew, or a tree broke the distant horizon; but now we suddenly reach a spot where Nature is blooming, and where her fairest productions show most fair.

It seems almost incredible that the same epoch which witnessed the host of wretched imitations of Theocritus and Bion, called "Pastorals," should also boast of "the Gentle Shepherd," which stands pre-eminent as a perfect picture of Scottish rural life—natural, simple, and unsophisticated. Ramsay, however, is a better depicter of rustic manners than of inanimate scenery; his forte lay in describing mental rather than physical phenomena, although he was not blind to the beauties of wild Nature. It is a pleasure to be able to close this chapter with a simple

garden scene, entirely free from the vices of the age, and at the same time illustrative of the cause of Ramsay's superiority over his contemporaries; he loved Nature rather than Art, and despised the rules of the critics and the artificial bondage of the Aristotelian theorists.

"I love the garden wild and wide,
Where oaks have plum trees by their side;
Where woodbines and the twisting vine
Clip round the pear-tree and the pine;
Where mix'd jonquils and gowans grow,
And roses midst rank clover blow
Upon a bank of a clear strand,
In wrimplings made by Nature's hand,
Though docks and brambles here and there
May sometimes cheat the gardener's care,
Yet this to me 's a Paradise
Compar'd with prim-cut plots and nice,
Where Nature has to Art resign'd,
Till all looks mean, stiff, and confin'd.

Heaven Homer taught; the critic draws Only from him and such their laws; The native bards first plunge the deep, Before the artful dare to leap."



Division IV.



1725 to 1780.



"Mark how Nature's hand bestows
Abundant grace on all that grows,
Tinges, with pencil slow unseen,
The grass that clothes the valley green,
Or spreads the tulip's parted streaks,
Or sanguine dyes the rose's cheeks."

W. HAMILTON.

was in this period that the first symptoms of a better taste, and a return to a more natural and simple style of thought, began to appear, but still without producing any results of sterling value.

The Scylla on which the preceding age foundered was over-refinement, and as men generally run into extremes, the age now under consideration

was ingulfed in the Charybdis of a bald and trifling simplicity.

Of all the springs of Helicon, the rill of simplicity is the most speedily intoxicating. A weak head instantly sinks under its influence into inanity or maudlin sentimentality. None but the strongest can "drink deep" of the water, and derive benefit from the draught. The heads of those writers who at this period sipped of the rill—dangerous and tempting as the juice of the grape—were weak; and the consequences were such, that if the next age had not produced strong heads and sound hearts, capable of drinking deeply, yet beneficially, the rill itself would have again fallen into disrepute.

With a return to a more natural train of thought, flowers were restored to poetry, and permitted to spring, though not very vigorously, in the more congenial soil.

Many of the poets of this period lived in the country, and there acquired a genuine love for Nature's beauties; and it is to be regretted, that such ardent admirers of flowers, as Shenstone, Langhorne, and John Scott, should have been unequal to the task of doing full justice to the objects and scenes which their tastes led them to frequent. They exemplified the dangerous influence of a love of simplicity on minds deficient in power and strong sense.

James Thomson formed an era in Poetry; for the publication of "The Seasons" was the first effort made to re-unite the Muse to Nature; though he certainly cannot be accused of erring on the side of simplicity. Had Thomson lived a century earlier or later, it is probable that he would have clothed his language in a more simple garb. That he did not do so, is to be attributed to the vicious taste of the age in which he lived. We shall often find that when a flower has been absent from poetry ever since the Elizabethan age, it has been restored by Thomson, and has again become an object of the poet's regard; and this fact fully justifies our placing Thomson at the commencement of a new period in Floral Poetry. The flowers of the garden which he so beautifully describes, will be found in their proper places in our pages; here, we shall only subjoin his more general description of the flowers of the field:—

"Oh come! and while the rosy-footed May
Steals blushing on, together let us tread
The morning dews, and gather in their prime
Fresh-blooming flowers.

*

Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot,
Full of fresh verdure, and unnumber'd flowers,
The negligence of Nature, wide and wild;
Where, undisguised by mimic Art, she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.
Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
In swarming millions, tend: around, athwart,
Through the soft air, the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud, and, with inserted tube,
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul,
And oft with bolder wing, they soaring dare
The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
And yellow load them with the luscious spoil."

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, whose poetry is more distinguished for easy sweetness than for depth of thought, lived a poet's life, and devoted his whole time and fortune to the embellishment of his paternal acres, the Leasowes, and the revival of a taste for a more natural style of gardening. The materials for his muse were those around him; consequently the flowers of his garden and fields are often culled to embellish his poetry, from which we shall have more frequent occasion to quote hereafter than in this place.

"Shepherd, would'st thou here obtain Pleasure unalloy'd with pain? Joy that suits the rural sphere? Gentle shepherd lend an ear.

Learn to relish calm delight, Verdant vales and fountains bright; Trees that nod on sloping hills, Caves that echo tinkling rills.

If thou can'st no charm disclose In the simplest bud that blows; Go, forsake thy plain and fold, Join the crowd, and toil for gold.

See to sweeten thy repose, The blossom buds, the fountain flows. Lo! to crown thy healthful board, All that milk and fruits afford.

Seek no more—the rest is vain; Pleasure ending soon in pain; Anguish lightly gilded o'er: Close thy wish, and seek no more."

There is a lively vigour about the following ballad by Christopher Smart, which reminds us of some of the lighter pieces of Burns :—

SWEET WILLIAM.

"By a prattling stream, on a midsummer's eve,
Where the woodbine and jess'mine their boughs interweave,
Fair Flora, I cry'd, to my arbour repair,
For I must have a chaplet for sweet William's hair.

She brought me the vi'let that grows on the hill, The vale-dwelling lily, and gilded jonquil; But such languid odours how could I approve, Just warm from the lips of the lad that I love?

She brought me, his faith and his truth to display, The undying myrtle and evergreen bay; But why these to me, who 've his constancy known? And Billy has laurels enough of his own.

The next was a gift that I could not contemn, For she brought me two roses that grew on a stem: Of the dear nuptial tie they stood emblems confess'd, So I kiss'd 'em, and press'd 'em quite close to my breast.

She brought me a sun-flower—this, fair one, 's your due, For it onee was a maiden, and love-sick like you—Oh! give it me quick, to my shepherd I'll run, As true to his flame as this flower to the sun."

John Scott, the first Quaker poet, was, like Shenstone, strongly attached to the pleasures of the garden, and, during great part of a quiet retired life, found amusement in beautifying a small hereditary estate. He was an accurate cataloguer of his flowers, and was fond of introducing them, with their humble brethren of the field, into his poetry. The selection of flowers in each of the following descriptions is quakerly correct both as to locality and season:—

A HEATH. (Spring.)

"A heath's gay wild lay pleasant to the view,
With shrubs and field-flowers deek'd of varied hue:
There hawthorns tall their silver bloom diselos'd,
Here flexile brooms bright yellow interpos'd;
There purple orchis, here pale daisies spread,
And sweet May lilies richest odours shed."

A COPSE'S SIDE. (Summer.)

"Sweet was the covert where the swains reclin'd!

There spread the wild rose, there the woodbine twin'd;

There stood the green fern, there o'er the grassy ground,

Sweet camomile and alchoof erept around;

And centaury red, and yellow cinque-foil grew,
And scarlet campion, and cyanus blue;
And tufted thyme, and marjoram's purple bloom,
And ruddy strawberries yielding rich perfume—
Gay flies their wings on each fair flower display'd,
And labouring bees a lulling murmur made."

John Langhorne was another poet with strong predilections for flowers, on which he founded several instructive fables, entitled "Fables of Flora." The following lines are from one of his Elegies:—

"Blows not a blossom on the breast of spring,
Breathes not a gale along the bending mead,
Trills not a songster of the soaring wing,
But fragrance, health, and melody succeed.

O let me still with simple Nature live, My lowly field-flowers on her altar lay, Enjoy the blessings that she meant to give, And calmly waste my inoffensive day!

Nor seldom, loit'ring as I muse along,

Mark from what flower the breeze its sweetness bore;
Or listen to the labour-soothing song
Of bees that range the thymy uplands o'er.

Slow let me climb the mountain's airy brow,
The green height gain'd in museful rapture lie;
Sleep to the murmur of the woods below,
Or look on Nature with a lover's eye.

Firm be my heart to Nature and to Truth, Nor vainly wander from their dictates sage; So Joy shall triumph on the brows of youth, So Hope shall smooth the dreary paths of age."





Wivisian V.

1780 to -



" How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood! An old place full of many a lovely brood, Tall trees, green arbours, and ground flowers in flocks." WORDSWORTH.

a previous chapter we compared the Floral Poetry of the Elizabethan era to the mixed border of a garden; the same class of poetry in this period partakes more of the aspect of the bed devoted to select flowers, in which the highest beauty and perfection of individual specimens are aimed at. Indeed, in each period, as we have previously observed, it may be perceived that the poetry is adapted to the prevalent taste displayed in the cultivation of the garden.

In the time of Chaucer the garden was little fostered, and the pleasure-grounds partook chiefly of that wild robustness of Nature which is so conspicuous a source of the waters of "the deep well of English undefiled." In the Elizabethan age, the pleasaunce, the curious knot, the maze, planted with every attainable variety of shrub and flower in harmonious commixture, were the desideratum; and the profusion with which flowers are in like manner mingled in the poetical works of the same period, justifies their comparison. In the next age, from Waller to Ramsay, the garden was trammelled in the monstrosities of the Dutch style; when canal-like ponds, straight walks, and "topiary work," were preferred to any thing like an appearance of natural

irregularity. As in the poetry of Cowley, which we have before quoted, the object was to denaturalize every thing natural, so, in the private demesne, hills were levelled to terraced flats, winding brooks cut into right lines, trees deformed to birds, beasts, temples, and statues; and if Cowley, in his "Ode to Solitude," had desiderated a garden of his time, instead of a solitary wood, he might have justly said,

"Here Nature does for me a house erect, Nature the fairest architect!"

for into such were Nature and her works converted. Lord Walpole said truly, "any man who had never been out of Holborn might have formed a garden of the Dutch style, for he had only to imitate the street in which he lived;" so also any poet who had never been out of a garret in the same street, might (as many did) have written the "pastorals" of the same date.

Next in order came the age of Thomson, when both gardening and poetry began to revert to Nature, and the English, or Natural Style took its rise. In our own day the interest of the general garden is sunk in that of the greenhouse and conservatory, and externally has yielded to the cultivation of individual flowers. It is not uncommon to see a beautiful garden disregarded and sacrificed to the cultivation of one or two species of plants, it being now the sole ambition of the horticulturist to display some new or strange-coloured flower, even though perfectly useless as a part of the general ornament of the garden. And this is no less the case in Floral Poetry; for nearly all the entire pieces devoted to special flowers are found amongst writers of the latter part of the eighteenth century down to the present day. The elder poets loved flowers for their own sakes and sought not to clothe them in adventitious beauties. If a sentiment were attached, a word was sufficient to convey it; and the sentiment was always made subordinate to the flower. But in the present period the flower is too often used only as a medium for the elaboration of the sentiment, and the beauty of the former is forgotten in the excitement of the latter

Still, in no period, have flowers, both individually and collectively, found more admirers than in the present; and many a volume has been formed of modern Floral Poetry alone. But, as we have remarked in

the preface, we shall refrain from extending our extracts into the present period, excepting indeed, by a few short snatches, little brilliant gems, which, adorning longer works, partake more of the character of the old style of Floral Poetry, and are, perhaps, less generally known than the entire pieces professedly treating of flowers.

WILLIAM COWPER was of a nature too gentle and amiable not to be a lover of flowers, and too religiously disposed not to see in his favourites the most striking evidences of the wisdom of the Creator, and of the happiness to be found in the contemplation of his works:—

"Nature is but a name for an effect. Whose cause is God. Not a flower But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain, Of His unrivall'd pencil-He inspires Their balmy odours, and imparts their hues. And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes; In grains as countless as the sea-side sands. The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth. Happy who walks with Him! whom what he finds Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flower. Or what he views of beautiful or grand In nature, from the broad majestic oak To the green blade that twinkles in the sun, Prompts with remembrance of a present God. His presence, who made all so fair, perceived, Makes all still fairer."

What has been said of the Floral Poetry of Shakspere is equally applicable to that of ROBERT BURNS; for though he very frequently describes individual flowers, he rarely mentions the generic term. Like Shakspere, the exactness of his knowledge of their habits and properties enabled him to be precise in his illustrations; and in the chapters on individual flowers we shall have frequent occasion to quote from his works.

CHARLOTTE SMITH is one of the most accurate and copious of floral poets, and has won the rarely-yielded meed of praise from Wordsworth, himself a fond worshipper of flowers. The following lines display at once the sources and the extent of her botanical knowledge:—

"An early worshipper at Nature's shrine. I loved her rudest scenes,—warrens, and heaths, And yellow commons, and birch-shaded hollows, And hedgerows, bordering unfrequented lanes. Bowered with wild-roses, and the clasping woodbine, Where purple tassels of the tangling vetch With bittersweet and briony inweave. And the dew fills the silver bindweed's cups-I loved to trace the brooks whose humid banks Nourish the harebell and the freckled pagil: And stroll among o'ershadowing woods of beech, Lending in summer, from the heats of noon A whispering shade; while haply there reclines Some pensive lover of uncultured flowers, Who, from the stumps with bright green mosses clad, Plucks the woodsorrel with its light thin leaves. Heart shaped and triply folded, and its root Creeping like beaded coral."

We could multiply quotations to an unlimited extent from this authoress, but want of space forbids, and we shall have frequent occasion to refer to her hereafter.

John Keats joys, revels, and luxuriates in flowers,

"April's tender younglings."

To him

"The poetry of earth is never dead."

He writes as if his wish had been gratified:

"Give me a golden pen, and let me lean On heap'd up flowers in regions clear and far;"

and as if his pen had been dipped in the juices of the flowers, and he had dyed his pages in their colours. He is never weary of eulogizing them, and in almost every page of his works are to be found,

"Garlands of every green and every scent,
From vales deflowered, or forest-trees branch-rent,
to suit the thought
Of every guest, that each as he did please
Might fancy-fit his brows."

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY is not a less enthusiastic admirer of

"The children of the hours,"

as he fancifully calls flowers; and if what he says be true, that

"No sister flower would be forgiven, If it disdained its brother,"

it would be well if the human tenants of the earth were to remember that they are likewise subject to a similar law.

DOROTHEA FELICIA HEMANS is another poetess from whom we might multiply quotations laudatory of flowers. It is to be noticed that she is exceedingly fond of introducing flowers to gladden for a time the chamber of sickness or of death.

The brief existence of the individual flower has been a frequent metaphor of the life of man; but Mrs. Hemans adduces the prolonged duration of the *species* to contrast with the rapid decay of his boasted works: and it is for the sake of this change in the stale—though ever beautiful—metaphor, that we select the following short passage:—

A frail shrub survives to bloom o'er Sparta's grave.

Oh! thus it is with man!—a tree, a flower,
While nations perish, still renews its race,
And o'er the fallen records of his power
Spreads in wild pomp, or smiles in fairy grace.
The laurel shoots when those have passed away
Once rivals for its crown, the brave, the free;
The rose is flourishing o'er beauty's clay,
The myrtle blows when love has ceased to be;
Green waves the bay when song and bard are fled,
And all that round us blooms, is blooming o'er the dead."

MRS. LETITIA ELIZABETH MACLEAN, better known as Miss Landon, or L. E. L., was, as will appear in subsequent pages, fond of playing odd freaks of fancy with flowers, especially with those of the garden, with which she was better acquainted than with wild ones; for, as she takes frequent occasion to boast, she hated the country, and knew no abode to be compared to London.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH loves

"the mute repose Of sweetly breathing flowers,"

even to an excess of over-wrought feeling :-

"Thanks to the human heart by which we live, Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears, To me the meanest flower that blows can give Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

And he exclaims,

"What joy more lasting than a vernal flower?"

But this refined sentiment is not engendered by the flower alone; it probably arises rather from its metaphysical associations; for

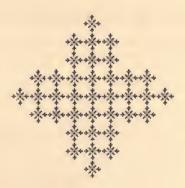
"Not from his fellows only man may learn
Rights to compare, and duties to discern!
All creatures and all objects, in degree,
Are friends and patrons of humanity.
There are to whom the garden, grove, and field,
Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield;
Who would not lightly violate the grace
The lowliest flower possesses in its place;
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,
Which nothing less than Infinite Power could give."

Or it may arise from contrasting the flower's joys with the cares of humanity, for he says,

"It is my faith that every flower Enjoys the air it breathes." He sums up in a few lines the appropriateness of flowers to all the occasions of human joy and sorrow:—

'———flowers themselves, whate'er their hue,
With all their fragrance, all their glistening,
Call to the heart for inward listening;—
And though for bridal wreaths and tokens true,
Welcomed wisely, though a growth
Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,
As fitly spring from turf the mourner weeps on,
And without wrong are cropped the marble tomb to strew."

With these beautiful lines, the introductory remarks on Floral Poetry may appropriately be closed.







The Daisy.

BELLIS PERENNIS.

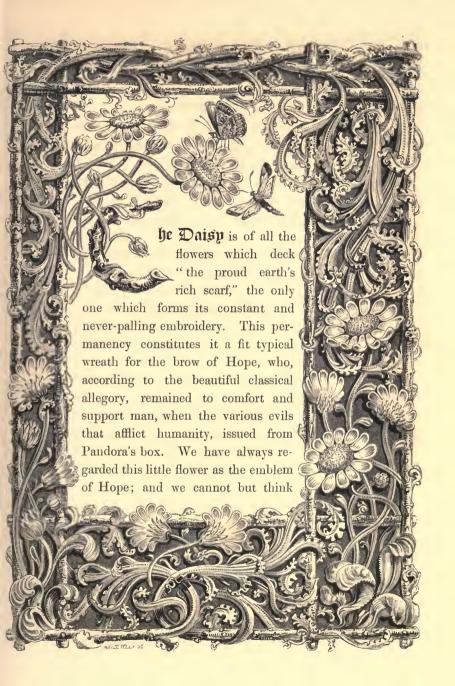


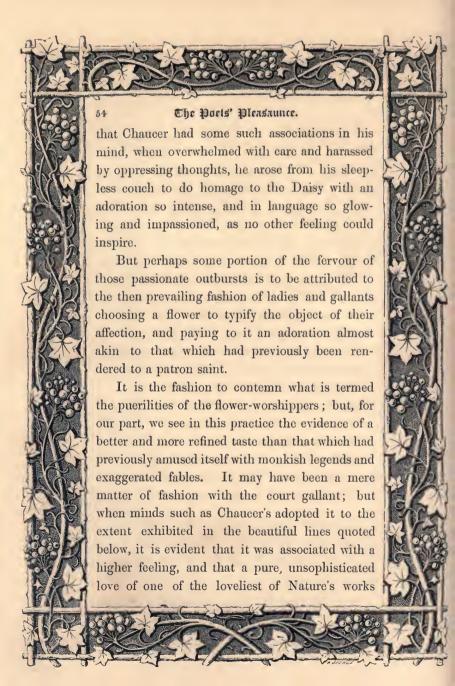


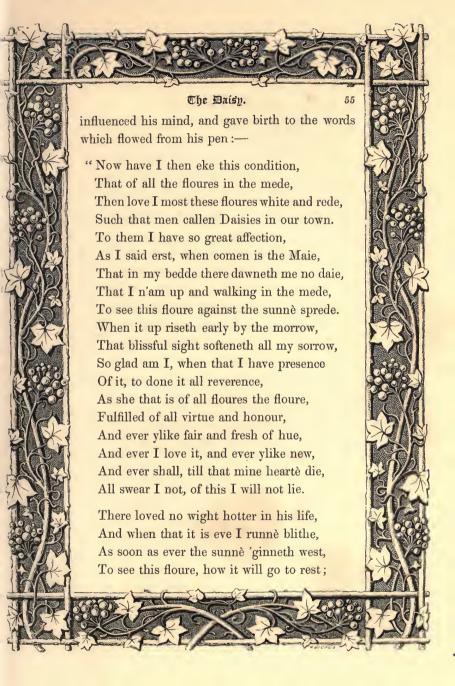
"We'll gae to some burn-side and play,
And gather flowers to busk ye'r brow;
We'll pu' the Daisies on the green,
The lucken gowans frac the bog."

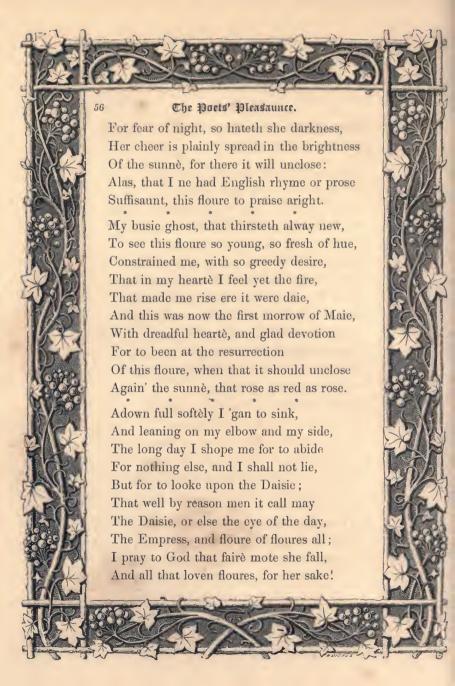
ALLAN RAMSAY.









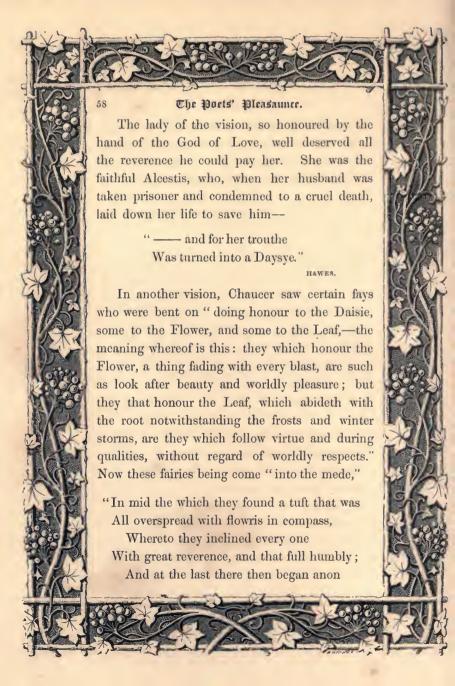


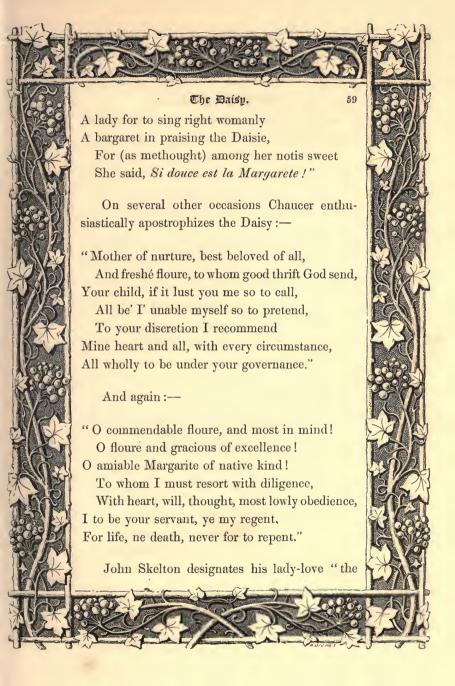


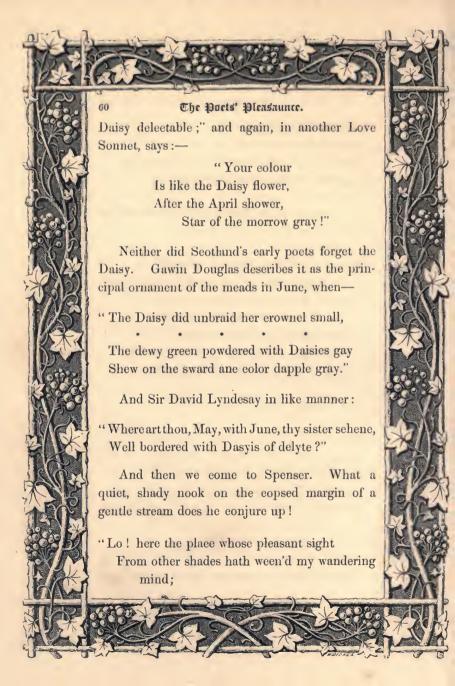
When that the sunnè out the south gan west, And that this floure 'gan close, and gan to rest For darkness of the night, the which she dread, Home to mine house full swiftly I me sped To gone to rest, and early for to rise, To see this floure to spread, as I devise.

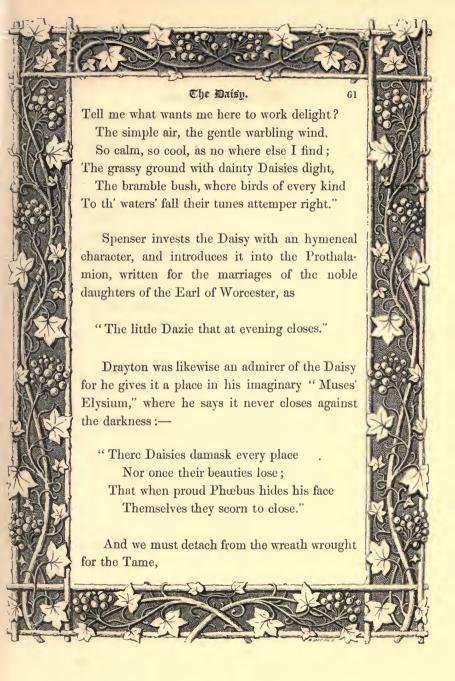
When I was laid, and had my eyen hid, I fell asleep and slept an hour or two. Me mete* how I lay in the meadow tho, To seen this floure, that I love so and drede, And from afar came walking in the mead, The god of love, and in his hand a queen, And she was clad in royal habit green, A fret of gold she had next her hair, And upon that a white crown she bear, With flourouns small, and I shall not lie, For all the world right as a Daisie Ycrouned is with white leaves lite, So were the florouns of her crown white. For of o'perle fine oriental, Her white crown was ymaked all; For which the white crown above the green Made her like a Daisie for to seem, Consid'red eke her fret of gold above.

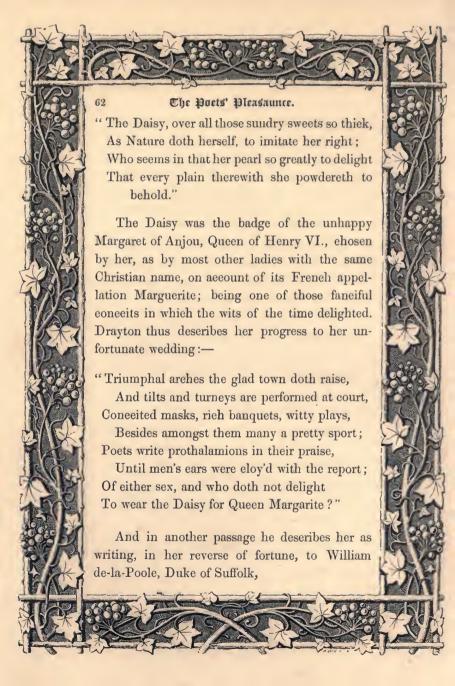
* Mete, dreamt.

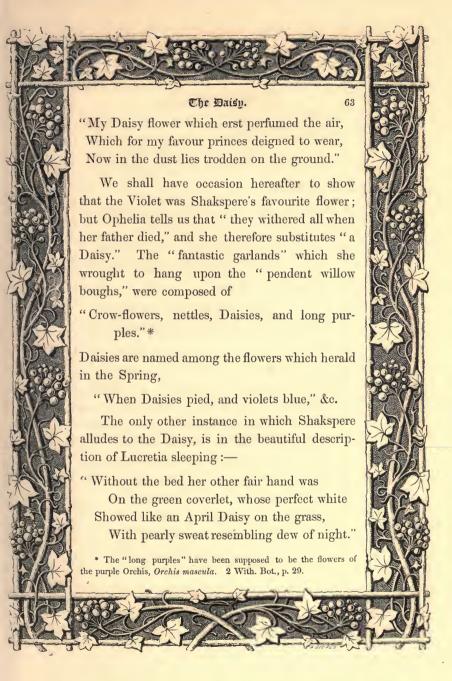


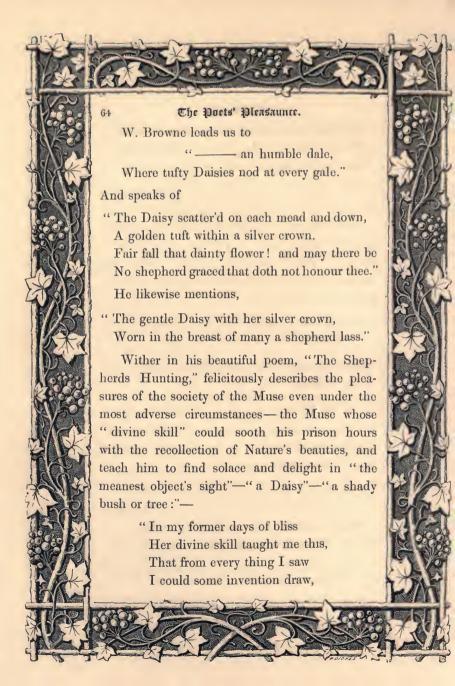


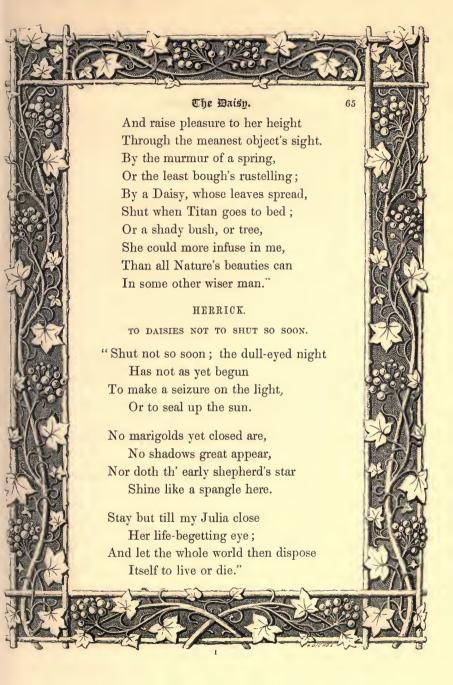


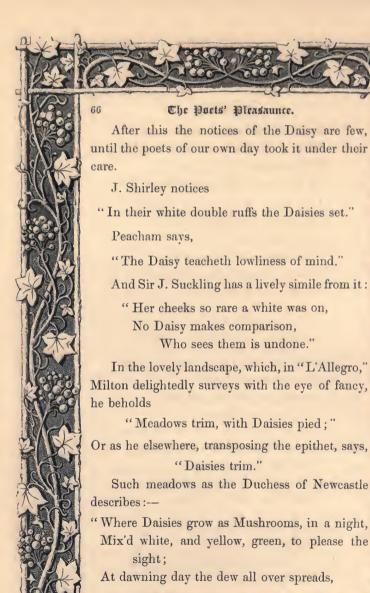


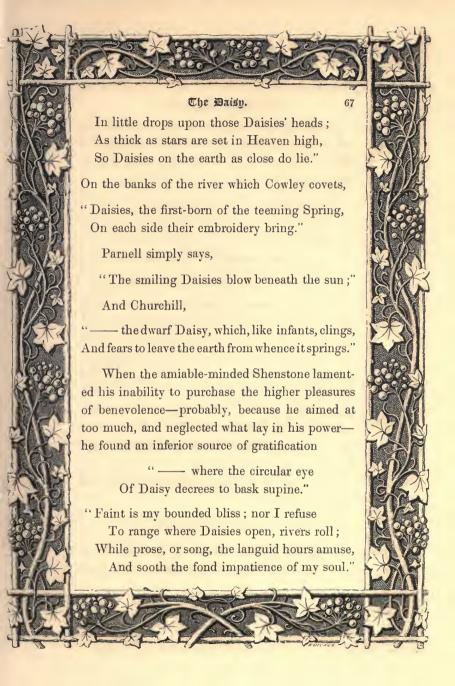


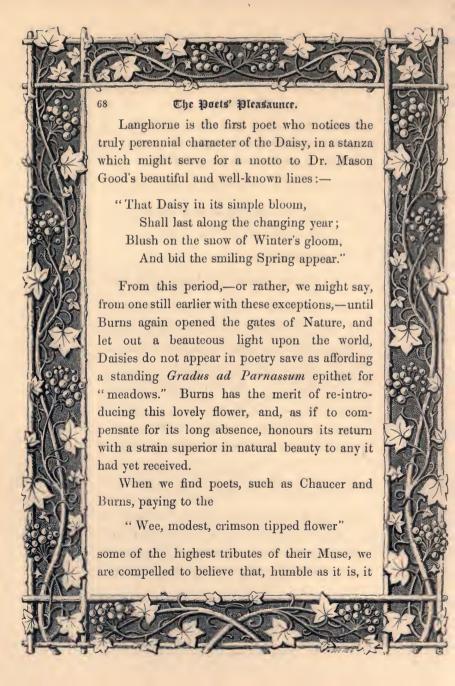


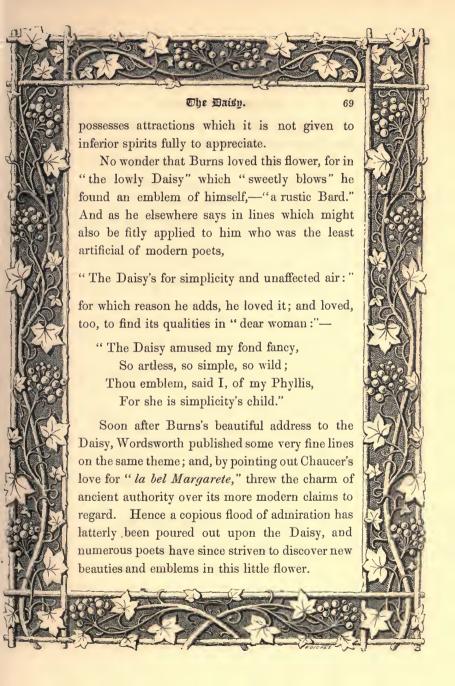


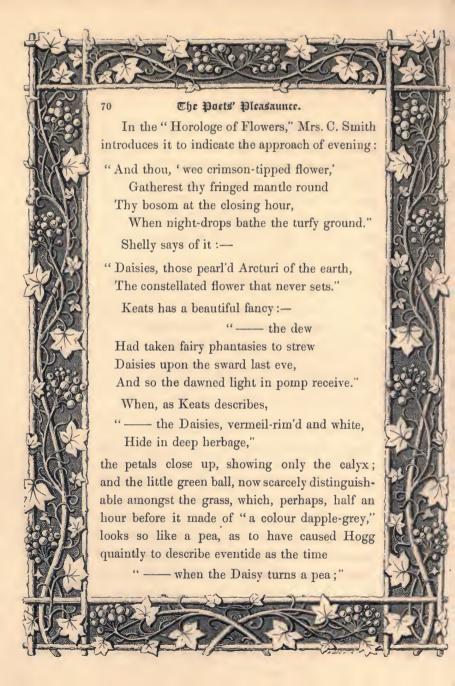


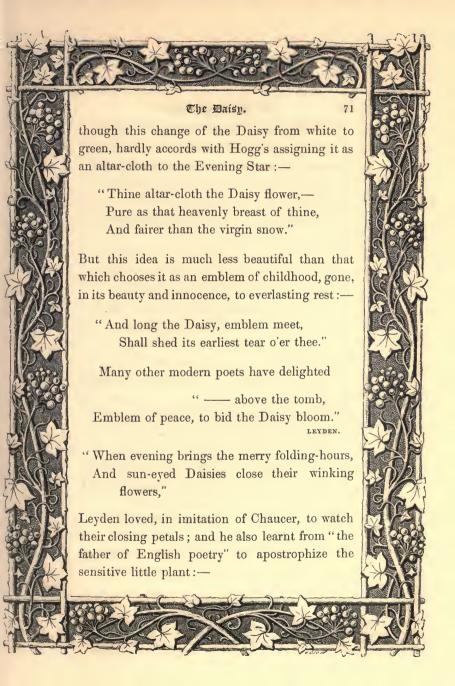


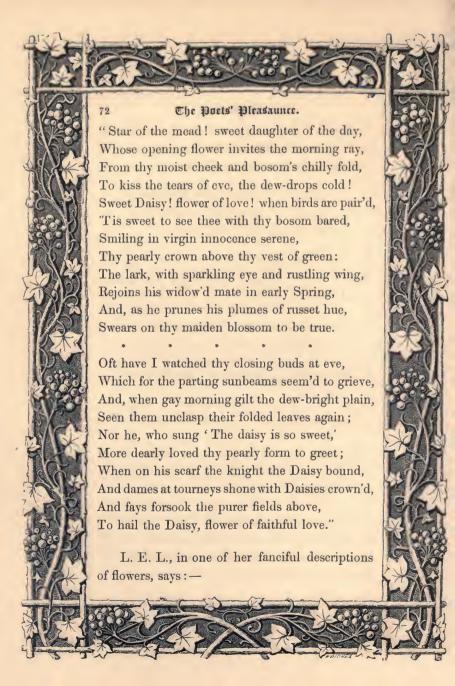


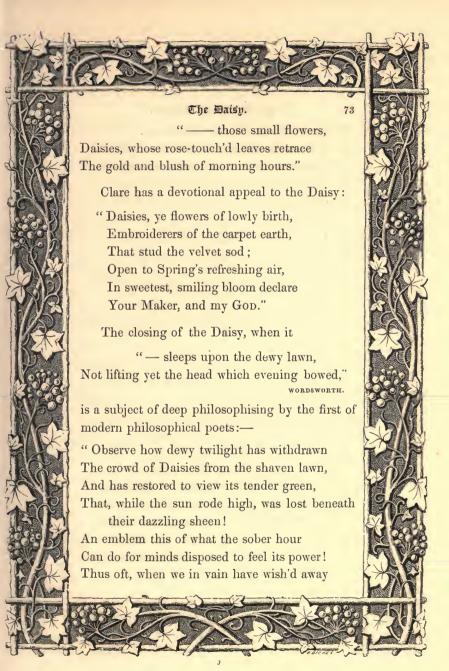


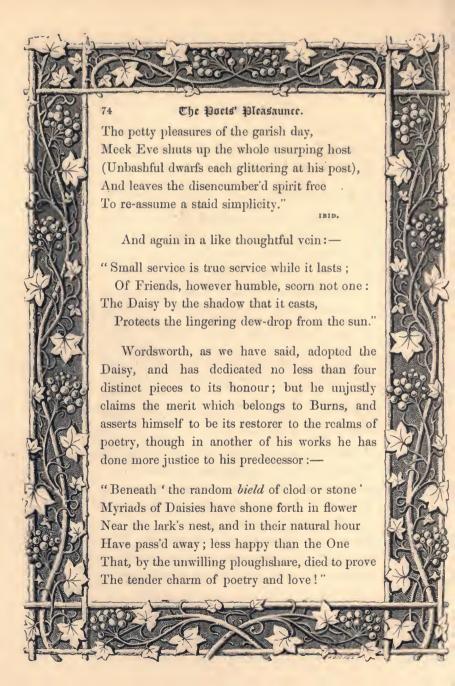
















The Snowdrop.

GALANTHUS NIVALIS.

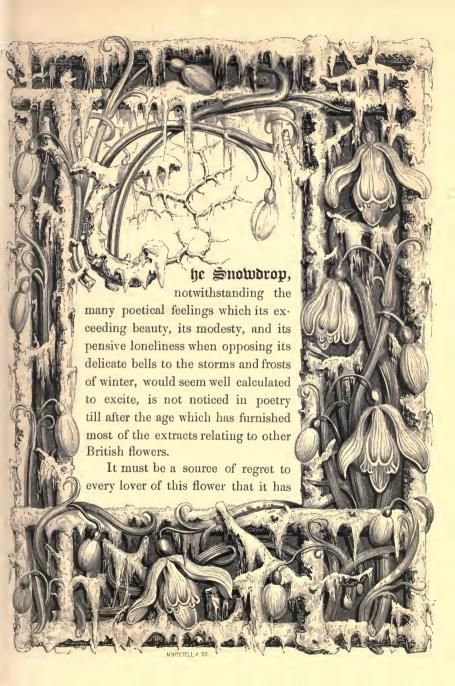


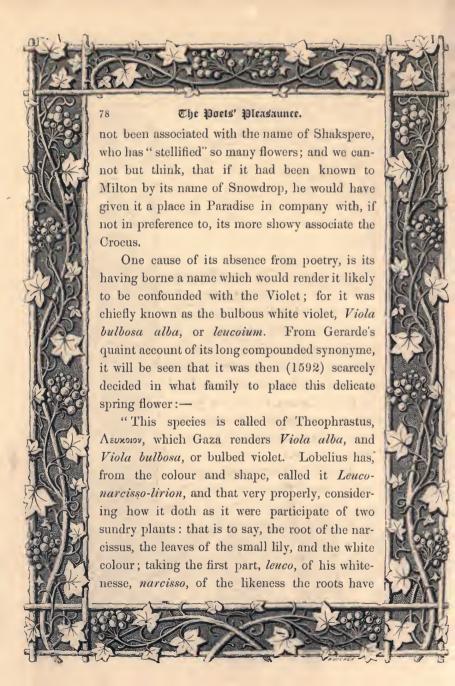


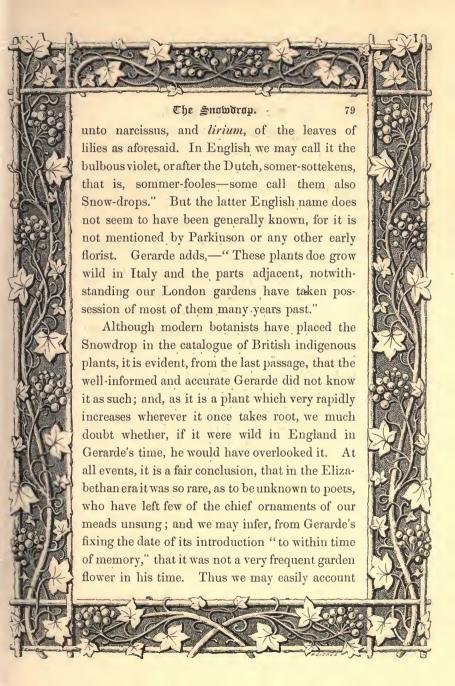
"The frail Snow-drop, Born of the breath of Winter, and on his brow Fix'd like a pale and solitary star."

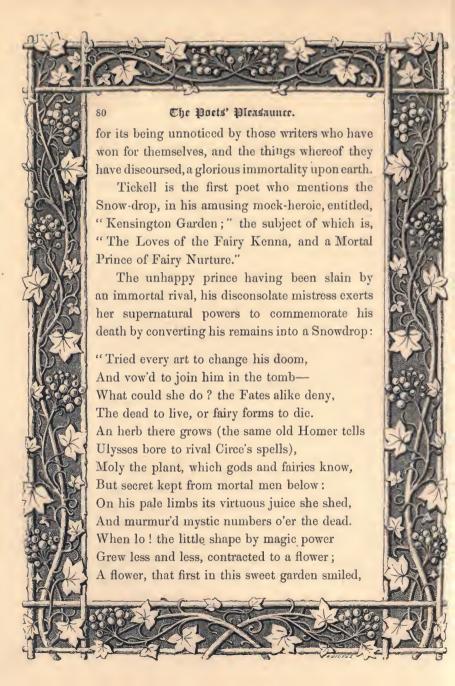
B. CORNWALL.

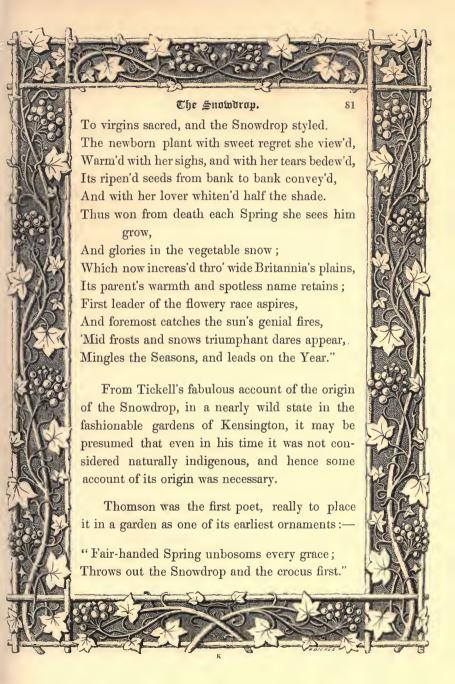


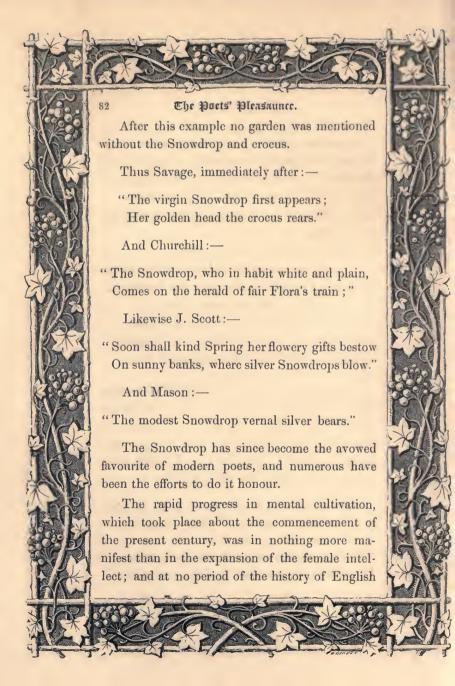


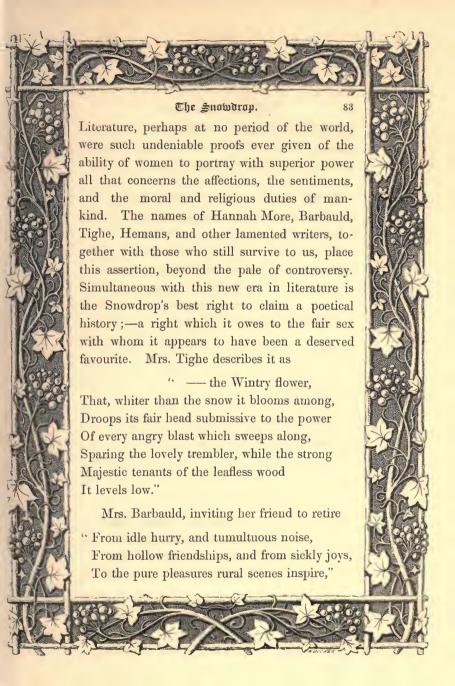


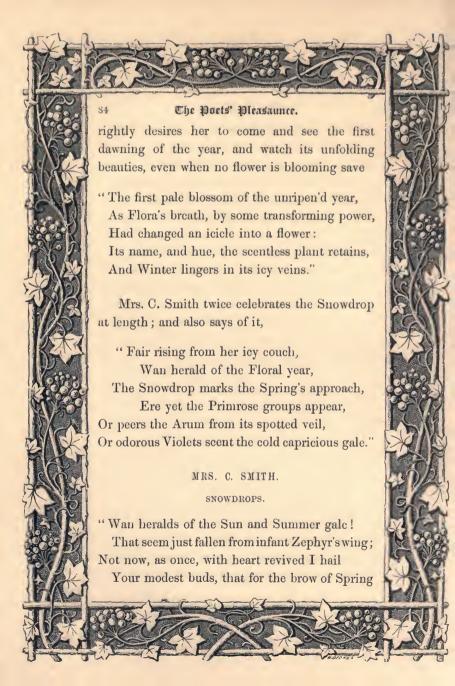


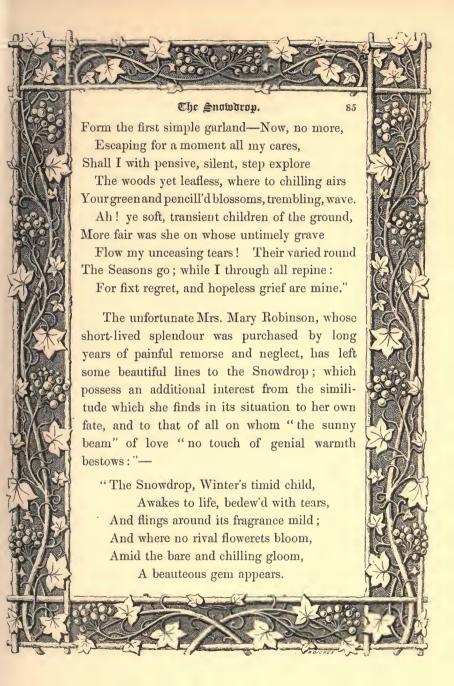


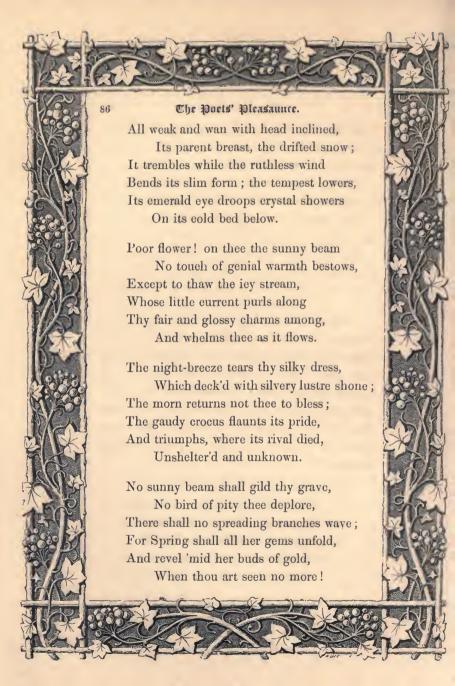


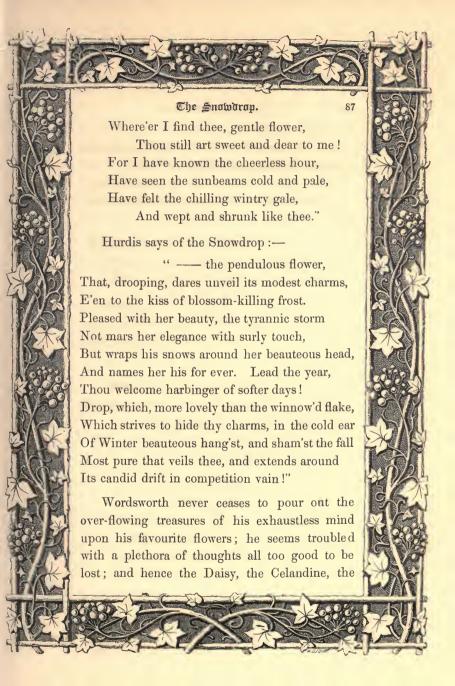


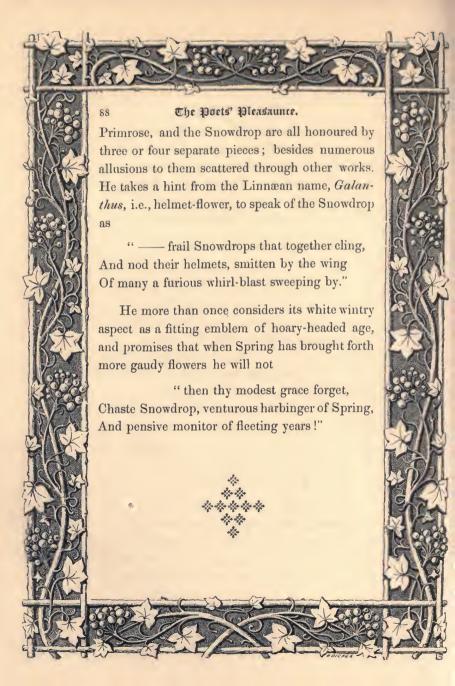


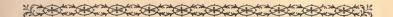














The Crocus.

CROCUS VERNUS.

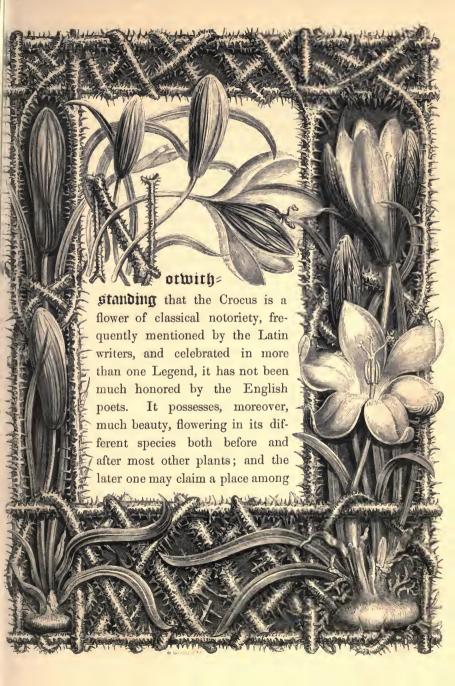


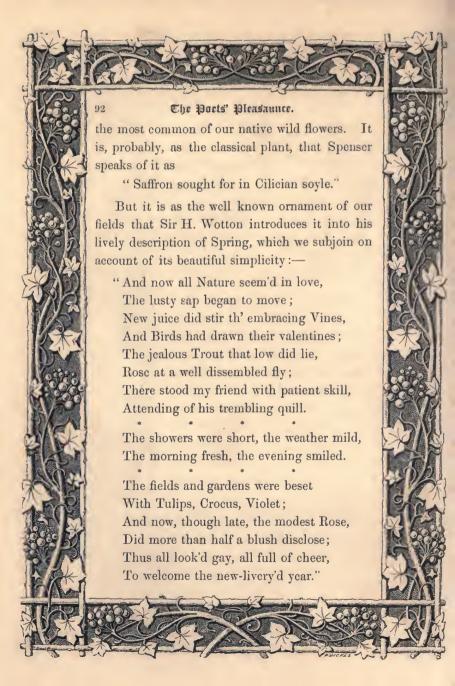


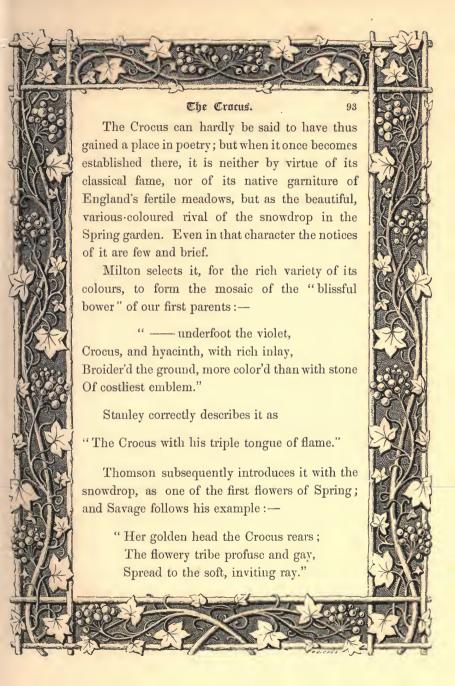
"What time the sun the yellow Crocus woos, Screen'd from the arrowy north."

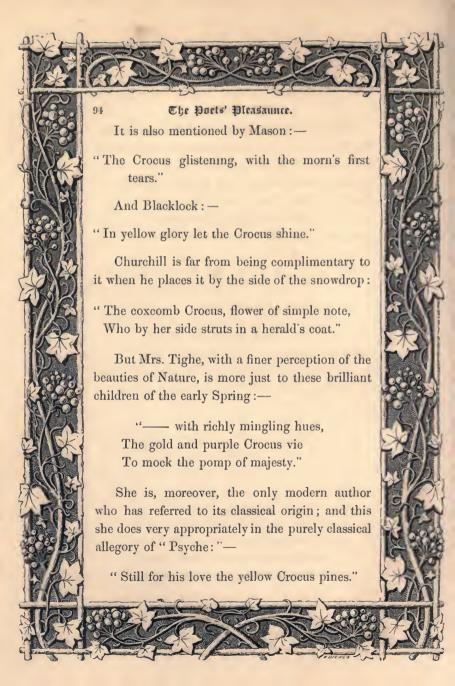
ROGERS.

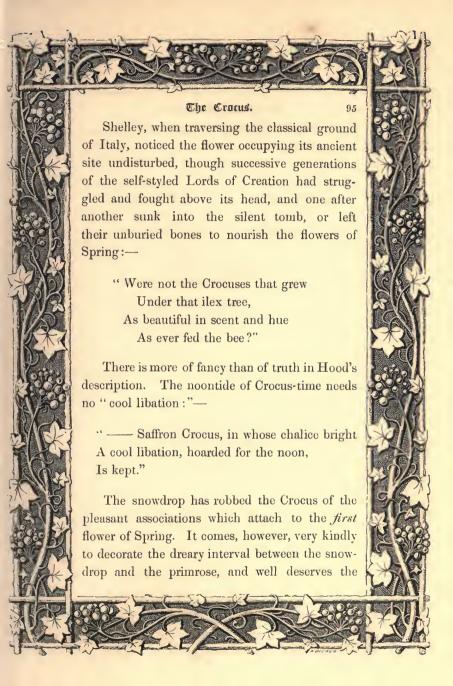


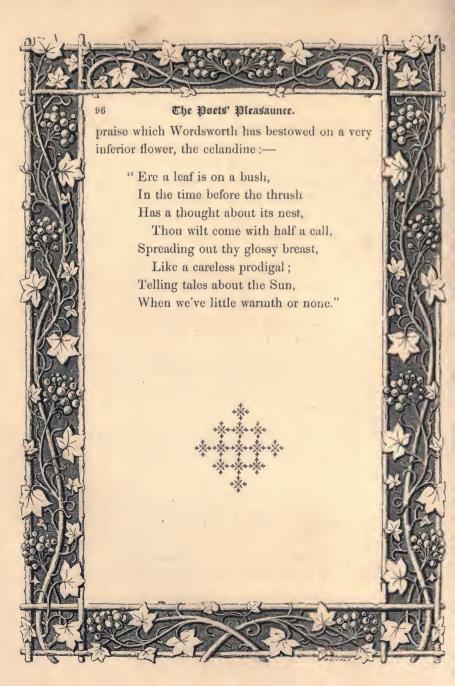












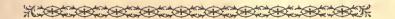




The Primrose.

PRIMULA VULGARIS.







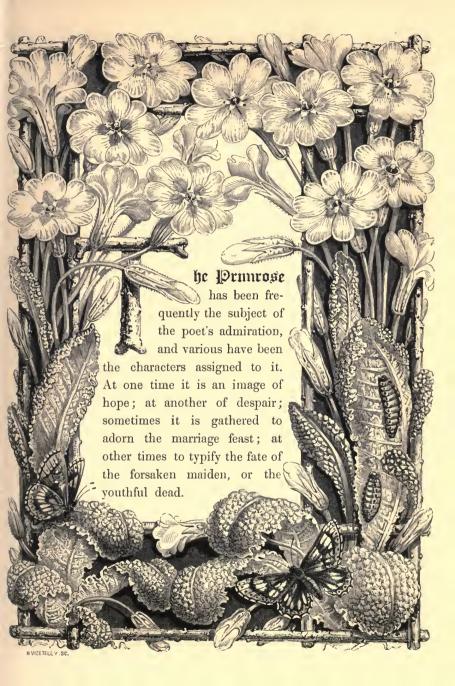
"Nature, new blossom'd, shed her odours round,
The dew-bent Primrose kiss'd the breeze-swept ground."

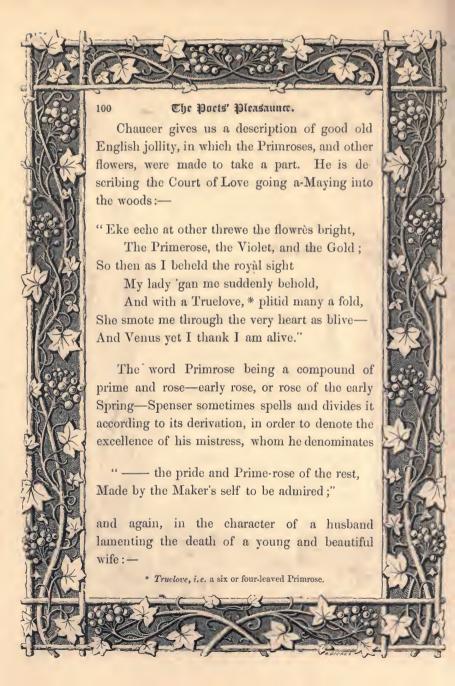
A. HILL.

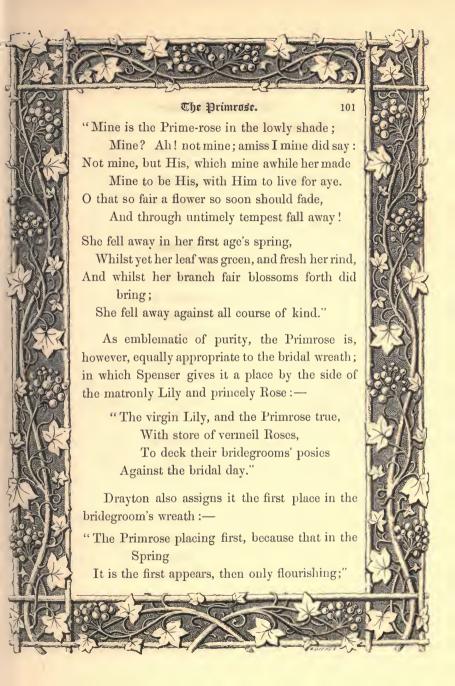
"— Primroses gather'd at midnight, By chilly-finger'd Spring."

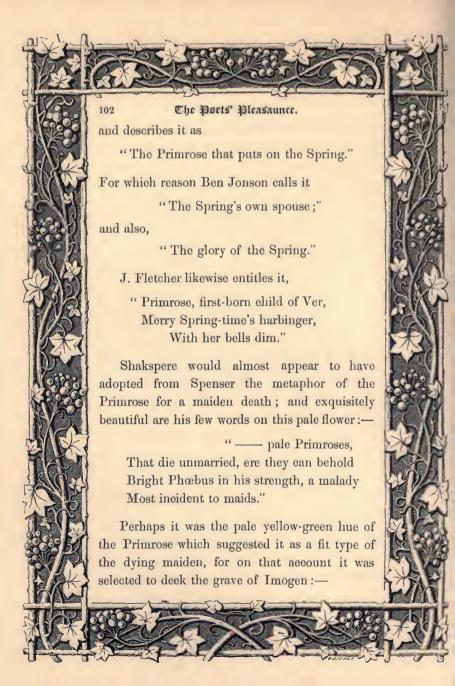
KEATS.

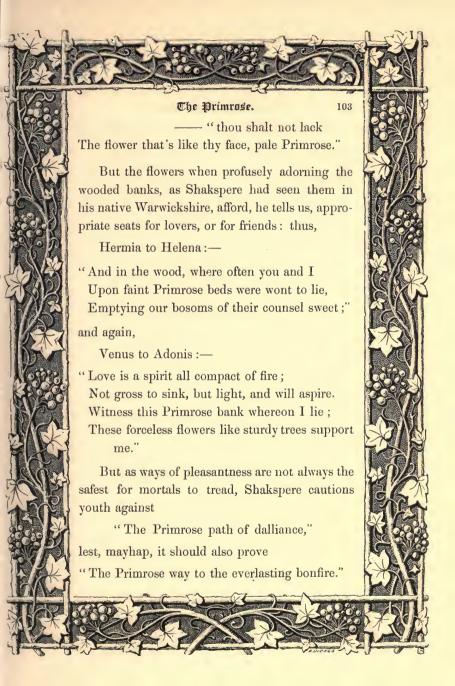


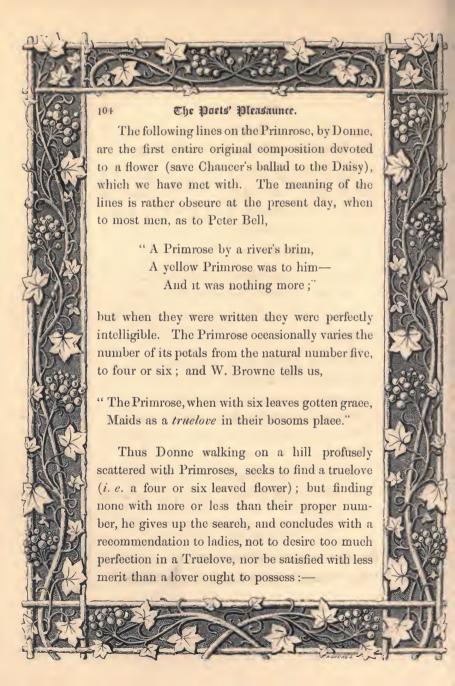












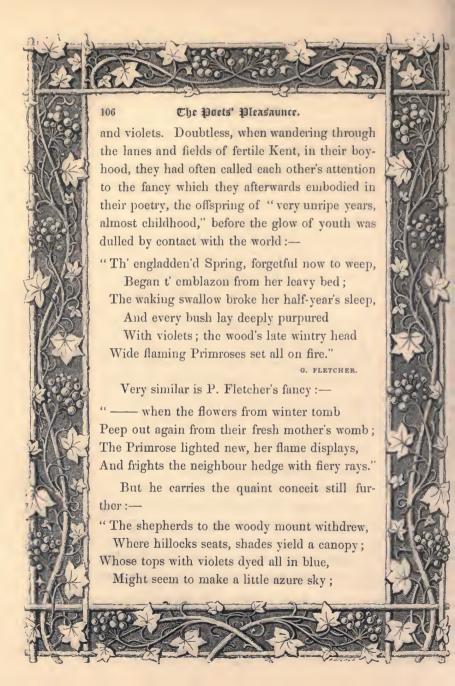


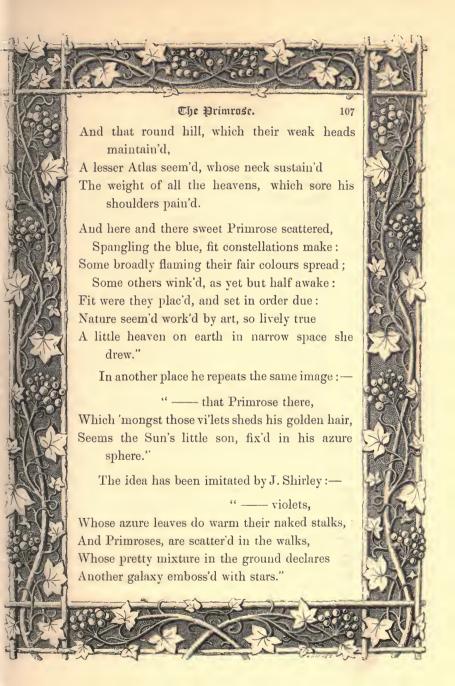
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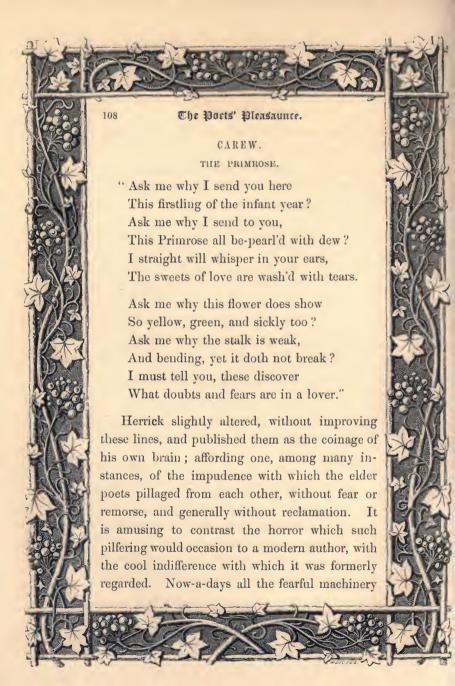
"Upon this Primrose hill
(Where, if Heav'n would distil
A shower of rain, each several drop might go
To his own Primrose, and grow manna so;
And where their form and their infinity
Make a terrestrial galaxy,
As the small stars do in the sky)
I walk to find a truelove, and I see
That 'tis not a mere woman that is she,
But must or more or less than woman be.

Yet know I not which flower
I wish, a six or four;
For should my truelove less than woman be,
She were scarce any thing; and then, should she
Be more than woman, she would get above
All thought of sex, and think to move
My heart to study her, and not to love:
Both these were monsters—
Live, Primrose, then, and thrive
With thy true number five;
And, women, whom this flower doth represent,
With this mysterious number be content."

The brothers, Phineas and Giles Fletcher, have each the same pretty conceit on Primroses









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of the Court of Chancery would be put in motion against the delinquent; then, not even a complaint was heard to guide us to the original author.

HERRICK.

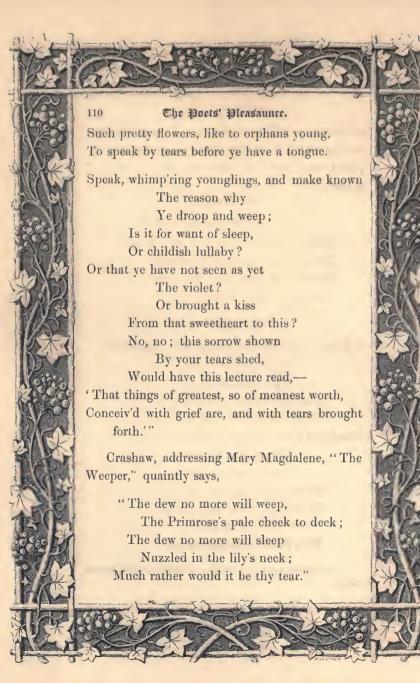
HOW PRIMROSES CAME GREEN.*

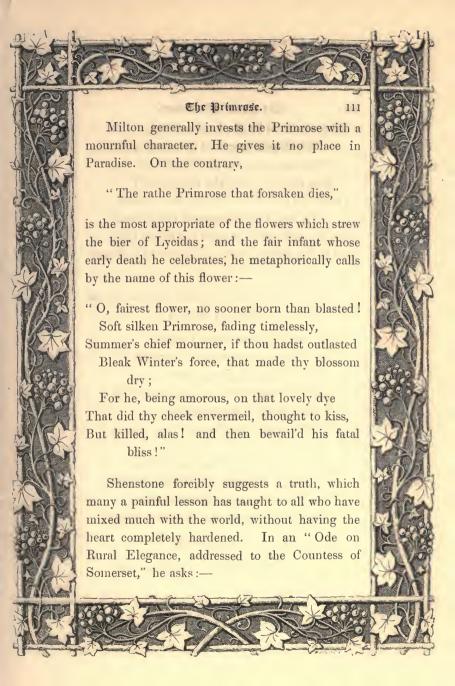
"Virgins, time-past, known were these Troubled with green-sicknesses; Turn'd to flowers; still the hue, Sickly girls, they bear of you."

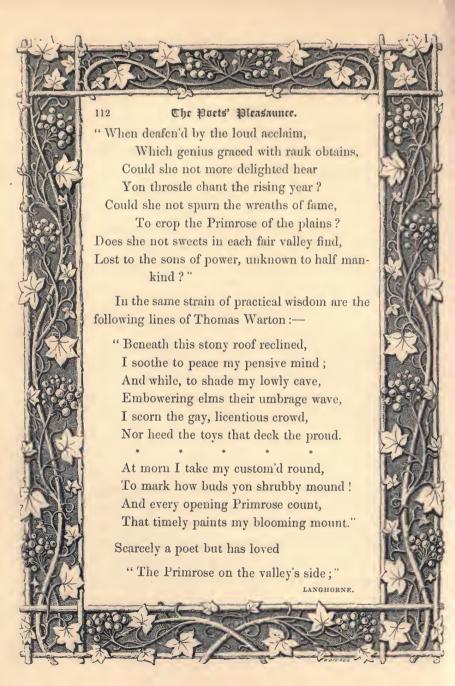
TO PRIMROSES.

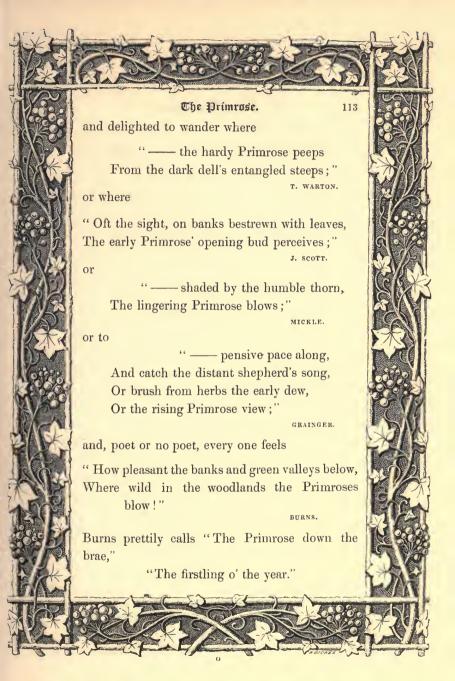
"Why do ye weep, sweet babes? Can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teem'd her refreshing dew?
Alas! you have not known that shower
That mars a flower,
Nor felt the unkind
Breath of a blasting wind;
Nor are ye worn with years,
Or warp'd as we,
Who think it strange to see

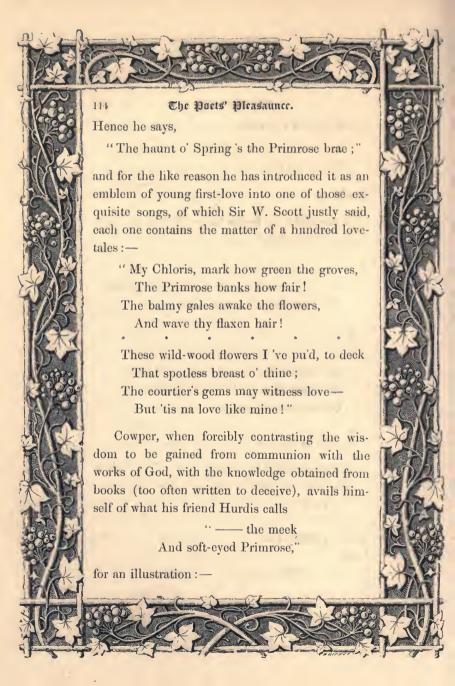
* The Primrose was termed green, or yellow-green, by the poets of this period.

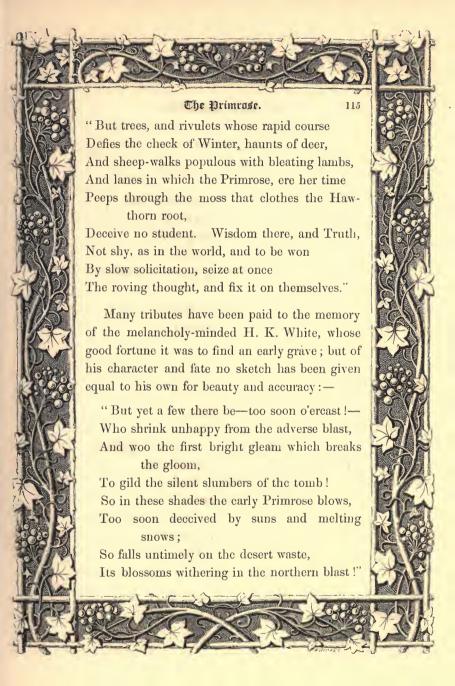


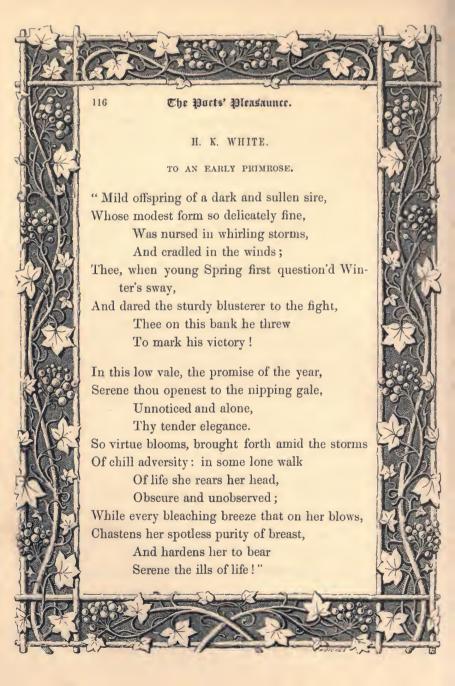


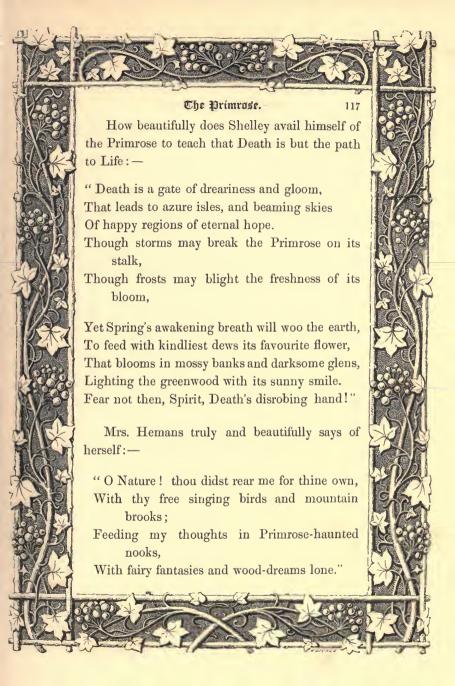


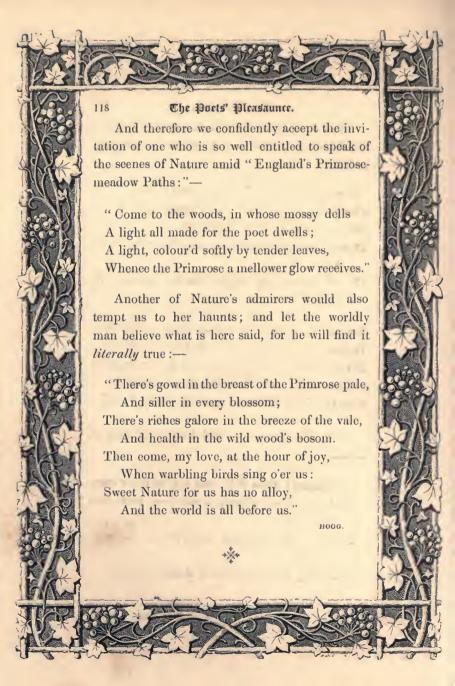


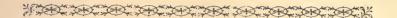














The Cowslip.

PRIMULA OFFICINALIS.

The Oxlip.

PRIMULA ELATIOR.





PRIMULA OFFICINALIS.

"Bowing adorers of the gale,
Ye Cowslips delicately pale,
Upraise your loaded stems,
Unfold your cups in splendour—speak!
Who deck'd you with that ruddy streak,
And gilt your golden gems?"

CLARE.

"Pale Cowslips, meet for maiden's early bier."

MRS. HEMANS.

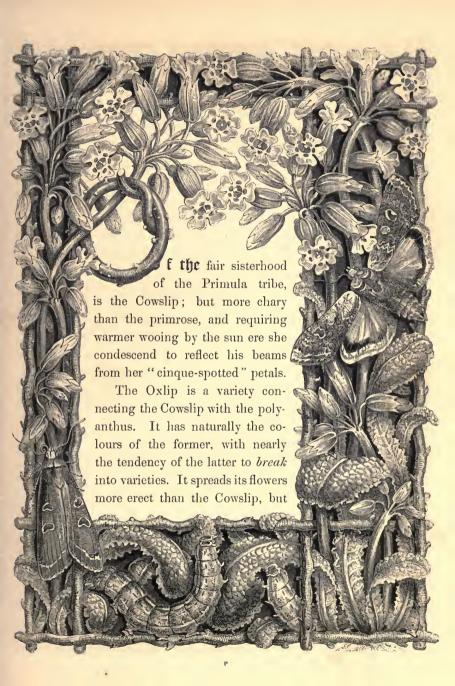


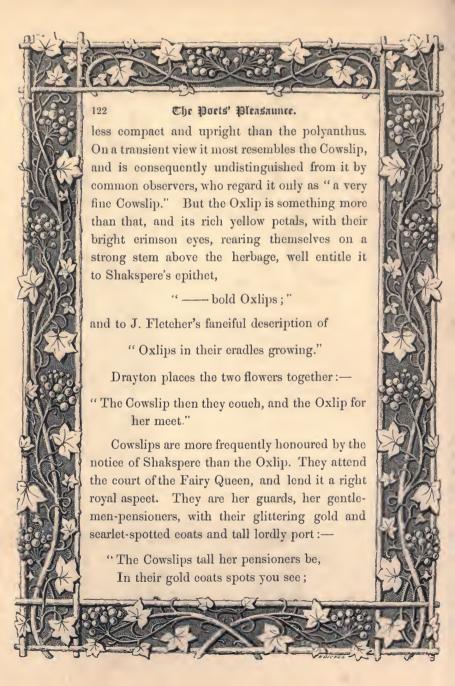
PRIMULA ELATIOR.

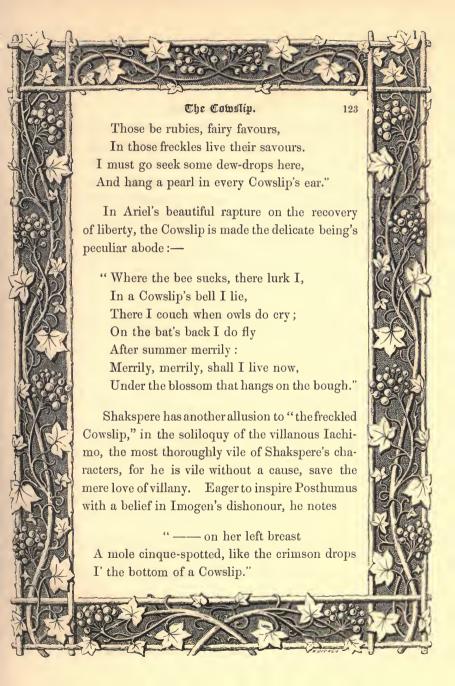
" I know a bank where the wild thyme blows, Where Oxlips, and the nodding violet grows."

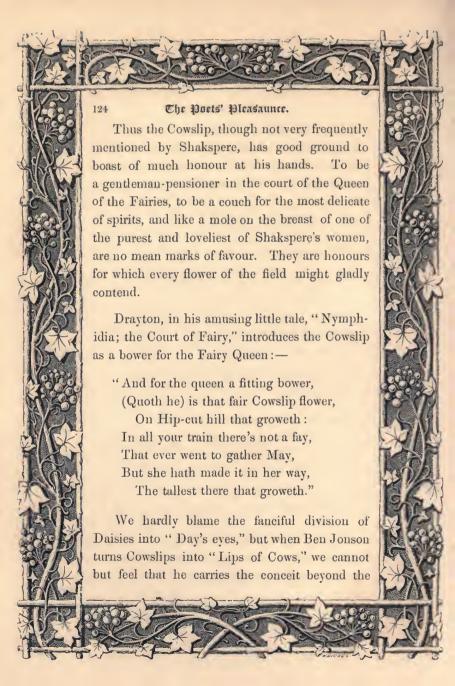
SHAKSPERE.

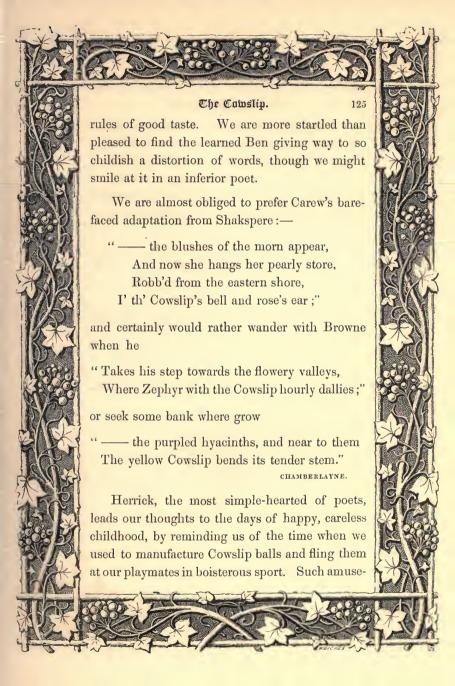


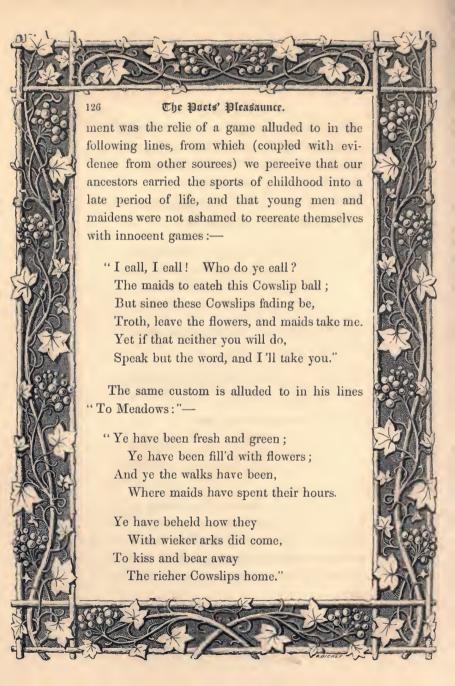


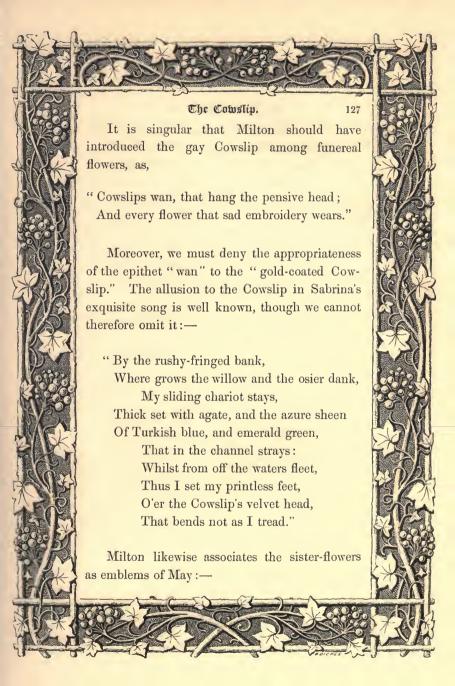


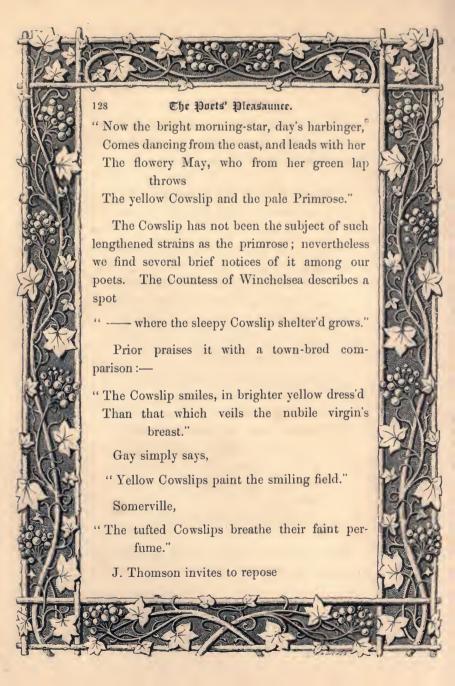


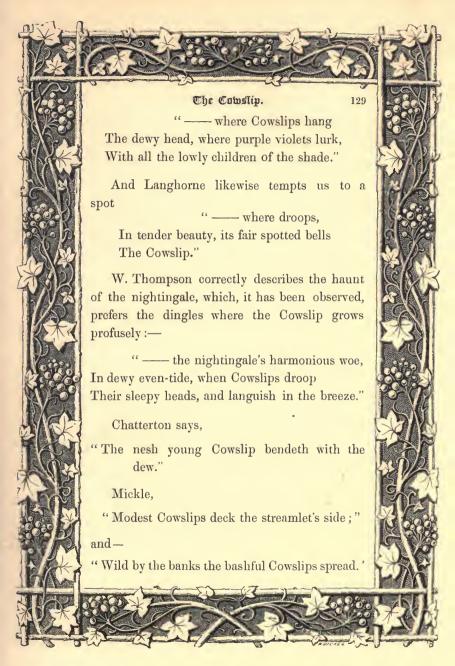


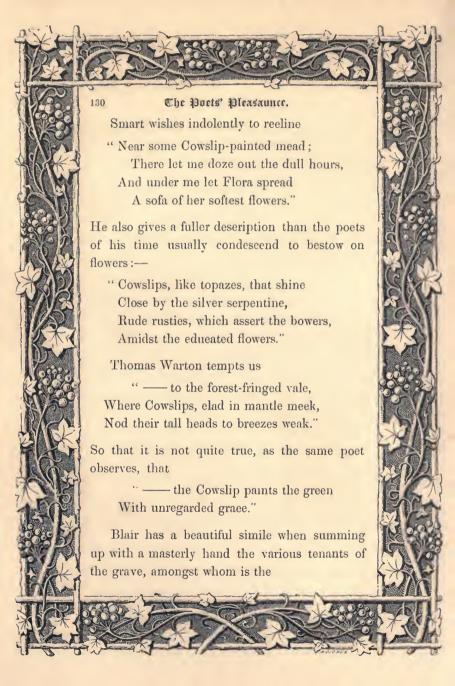


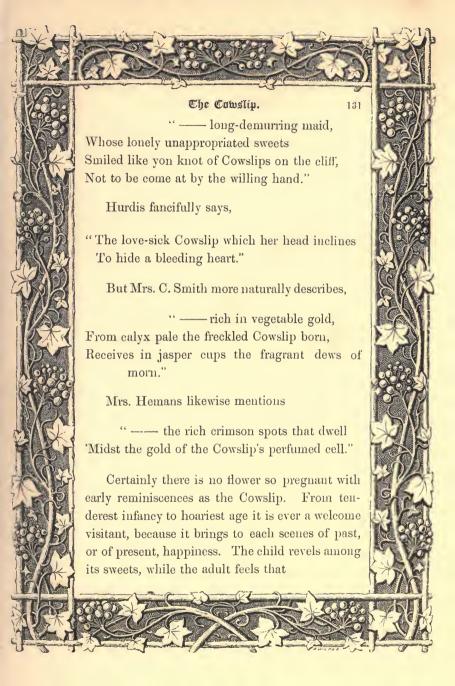


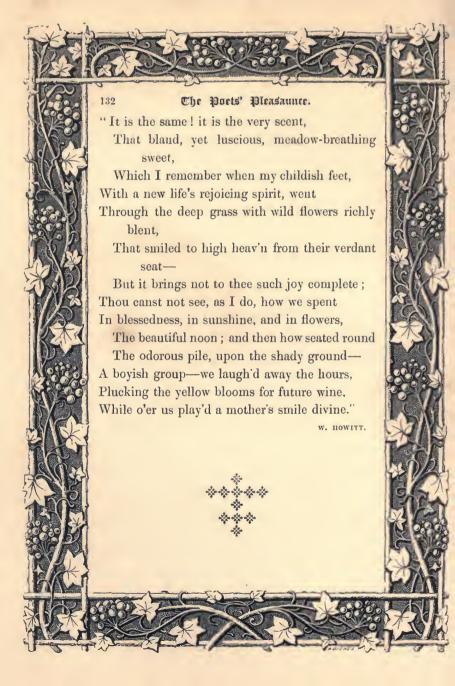


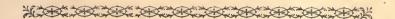












V

The Violet.

VIOLA ODORATA.





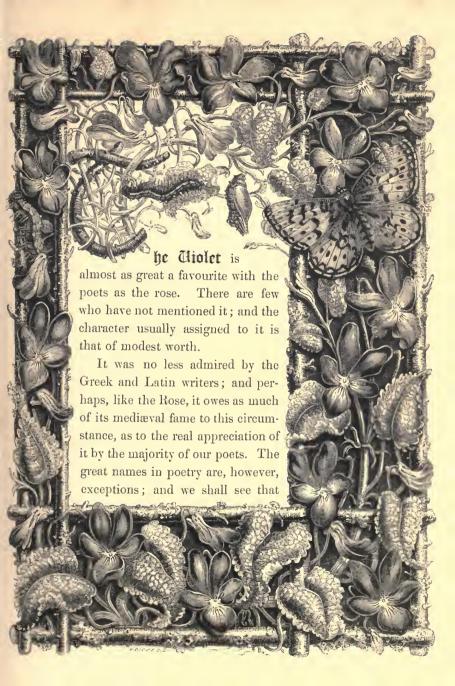
"The Violet enchants the scent, When early in the spring she breathes."

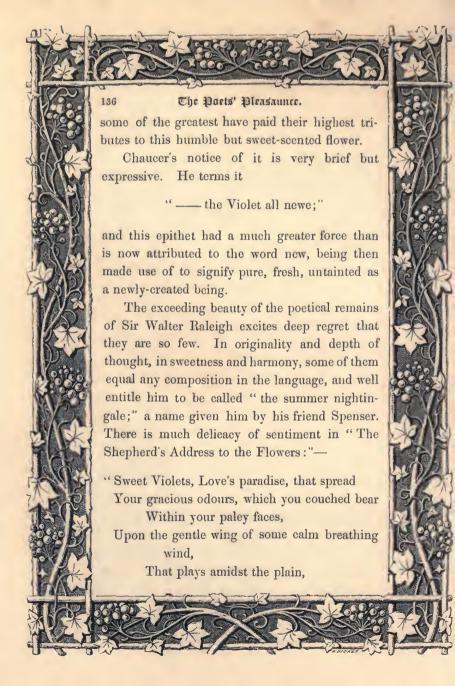
HABINGTON.

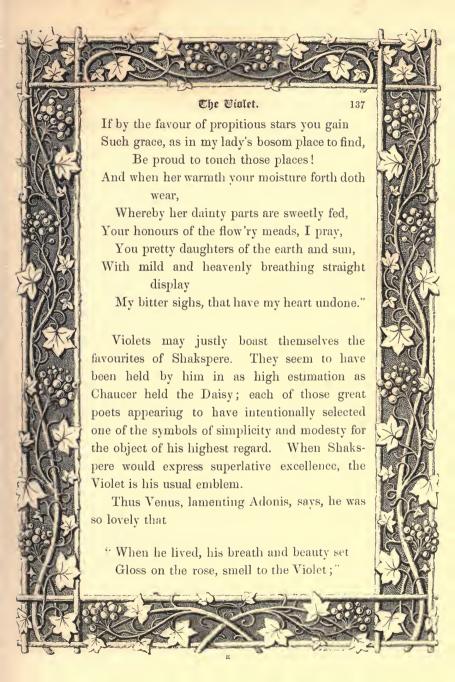
"Joyous and far shall our wanderings be,
As the flight of birds o'er the glittering sea;
To the woods, to the dingles where Violets blow,
We will bear no memory of earthly woe."

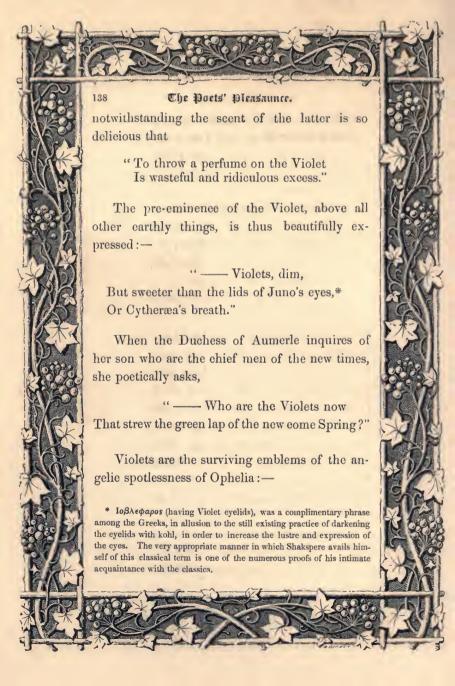
HEMANS.

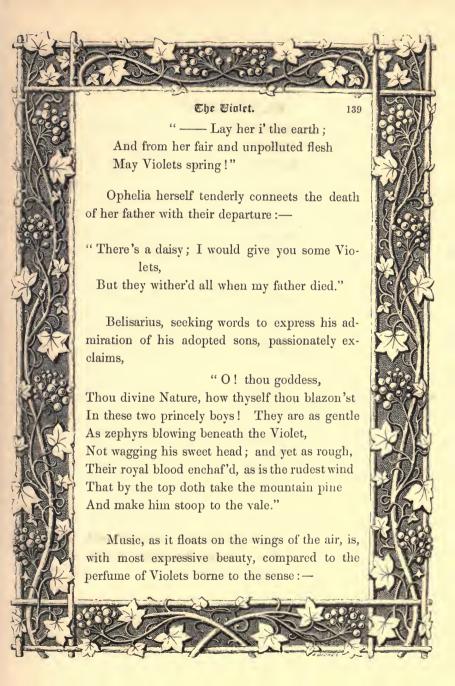


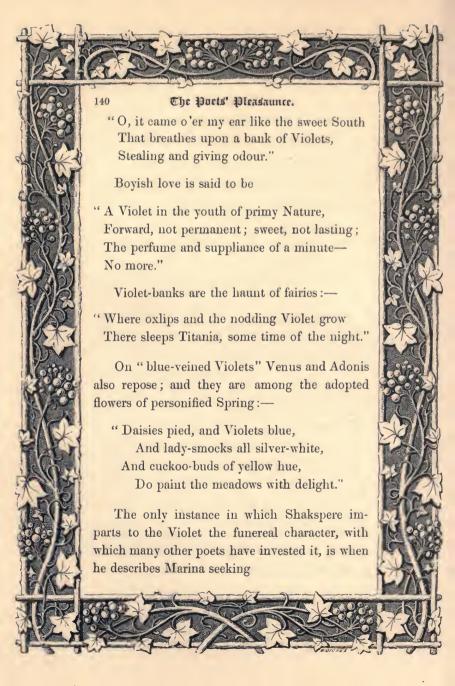


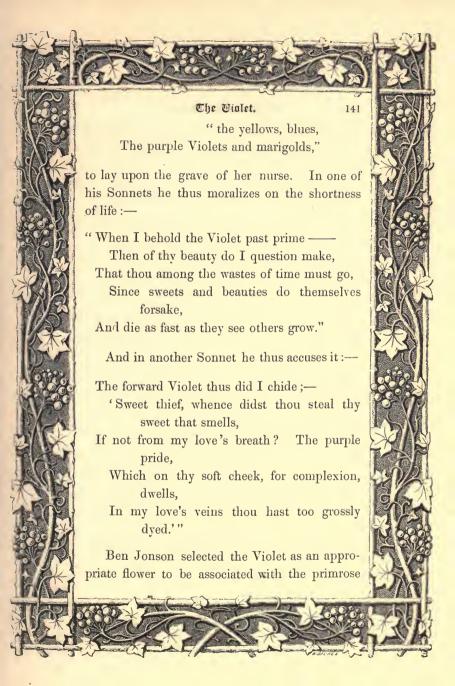


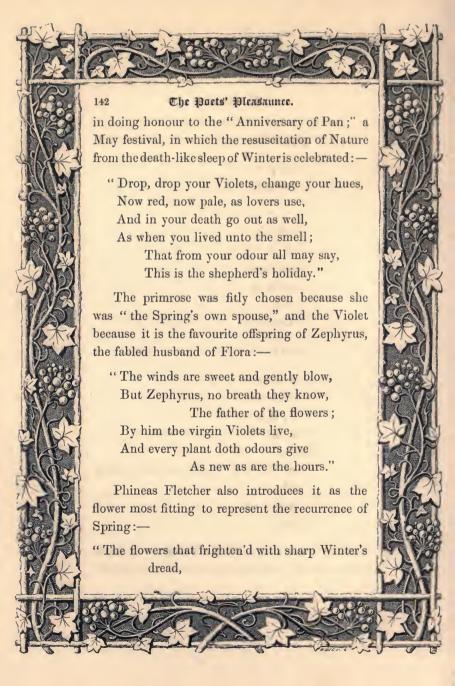


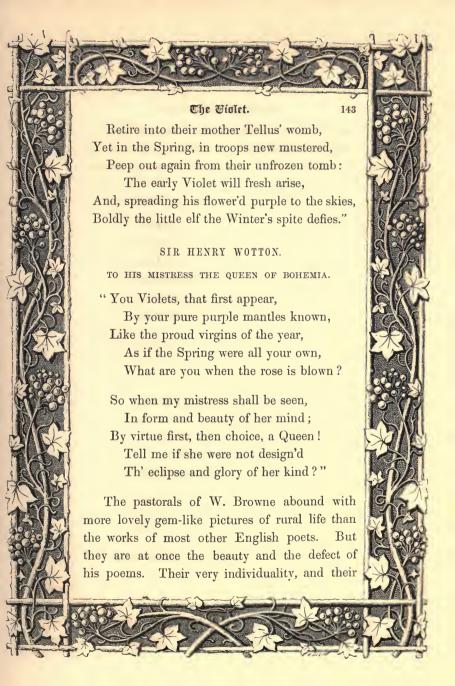


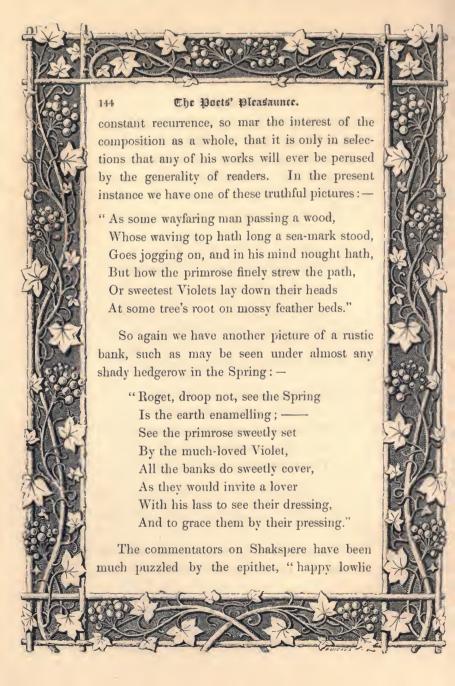


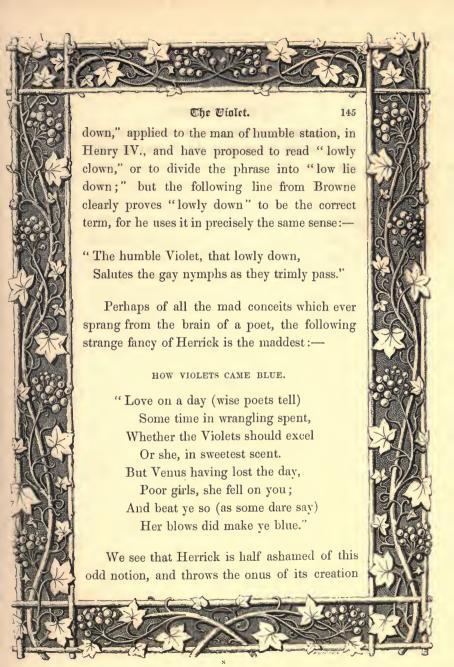


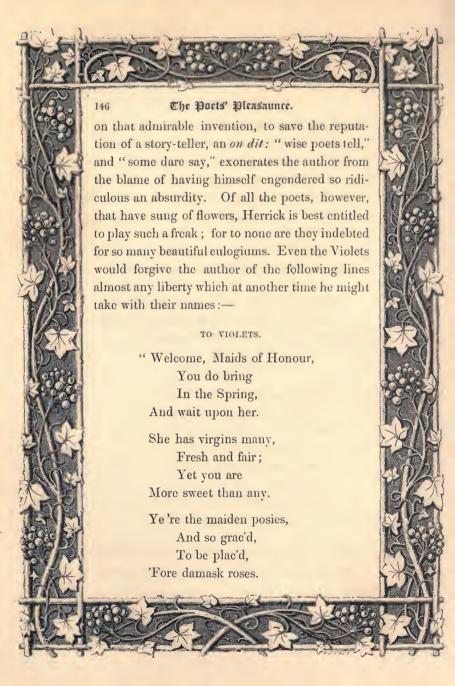


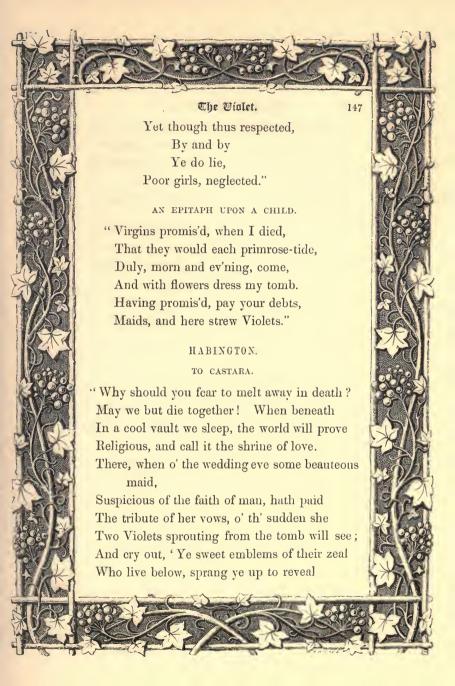


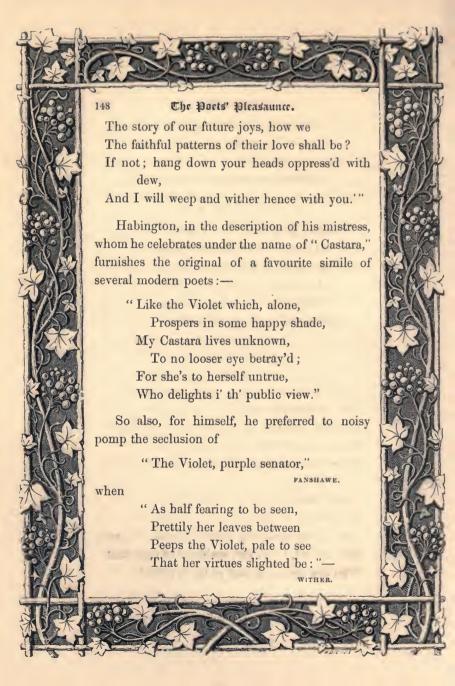


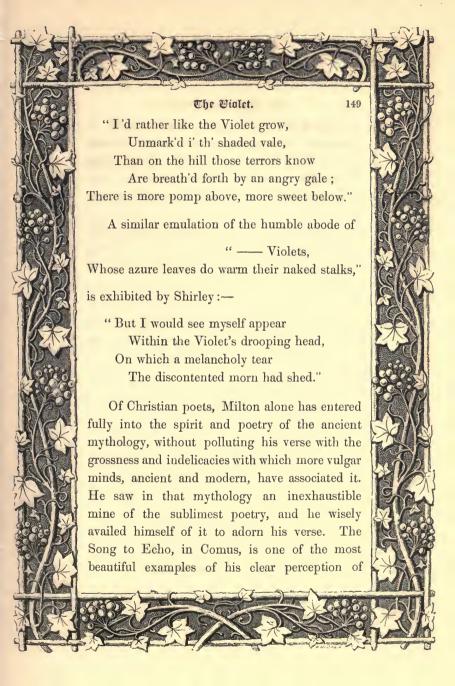


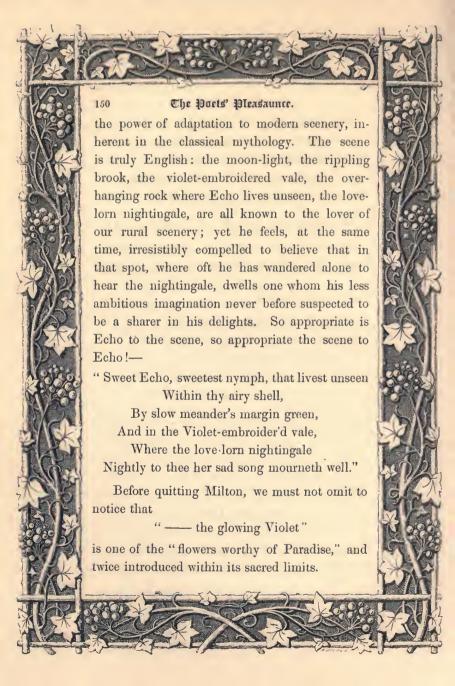


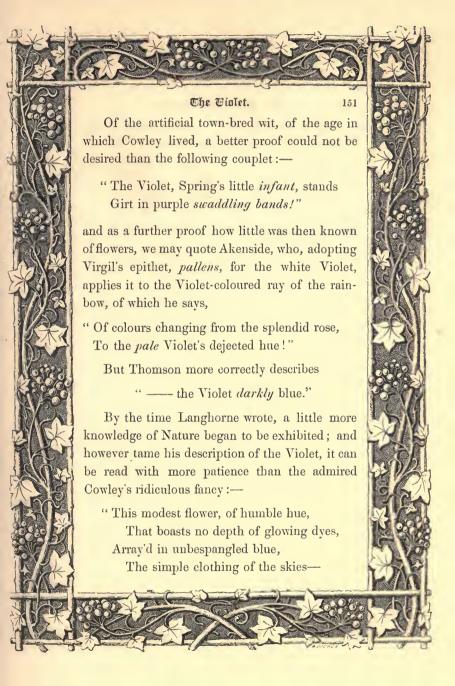


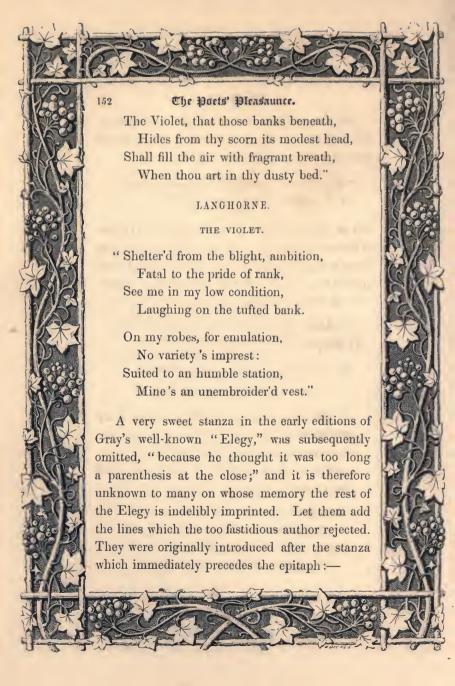


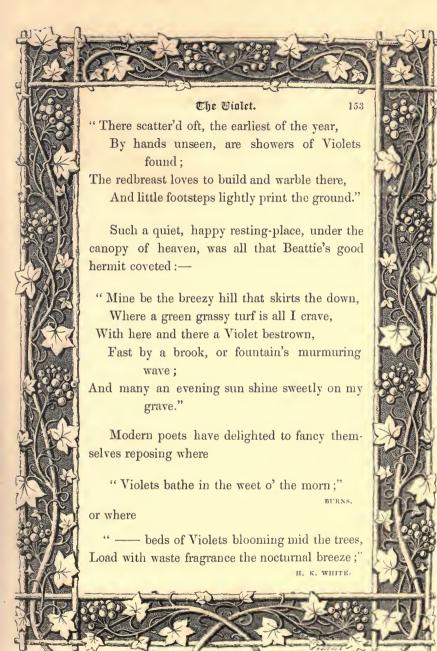


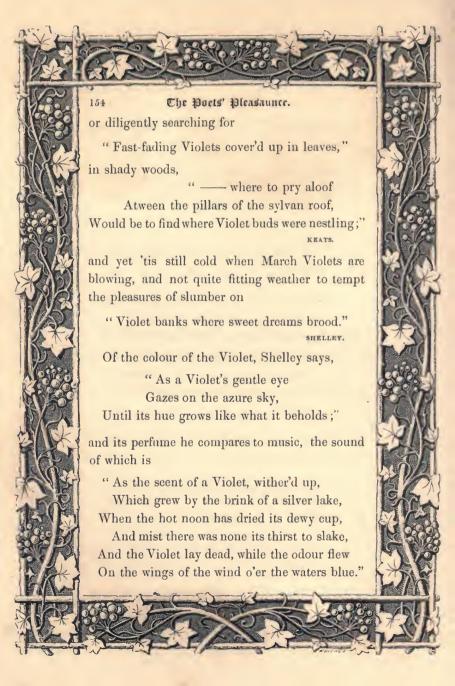


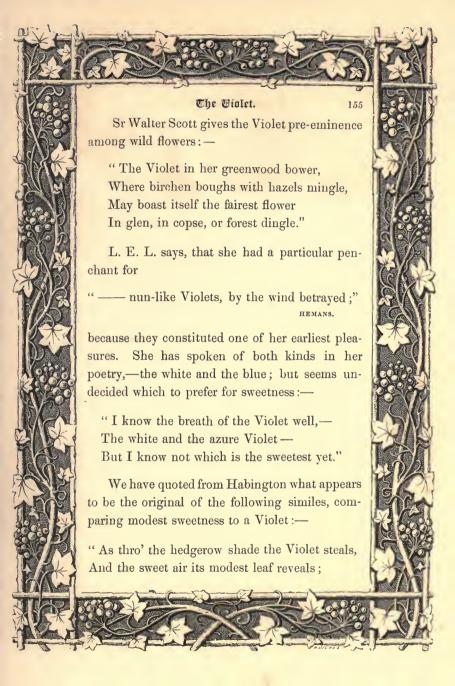


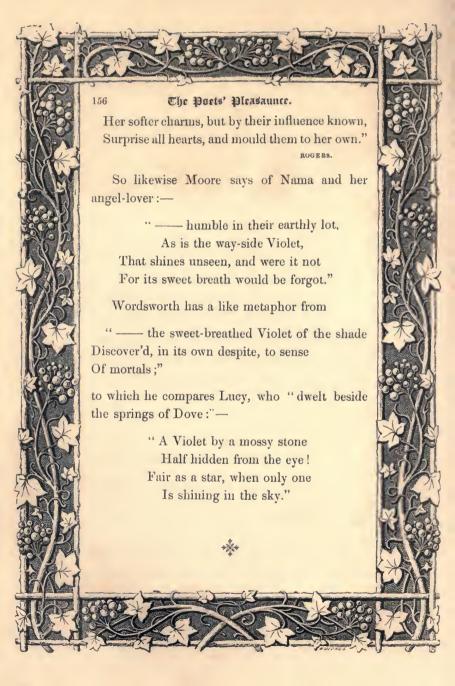












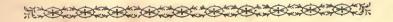




The Pansy.

VIOLA TRICOLOR.



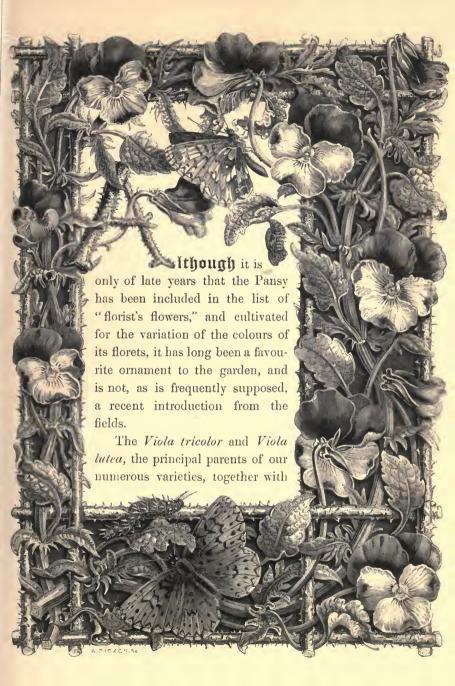


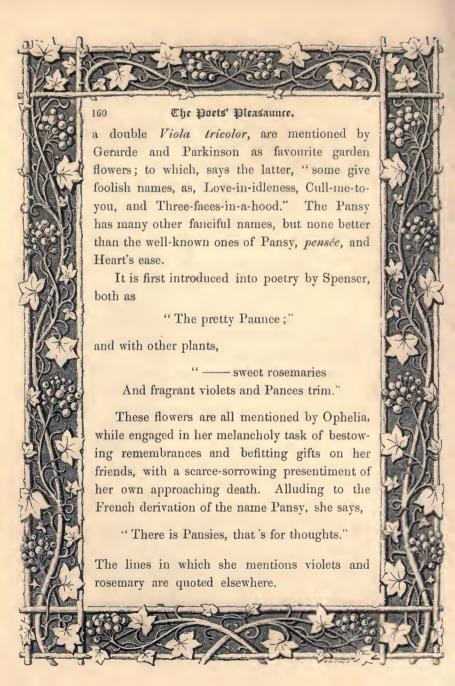


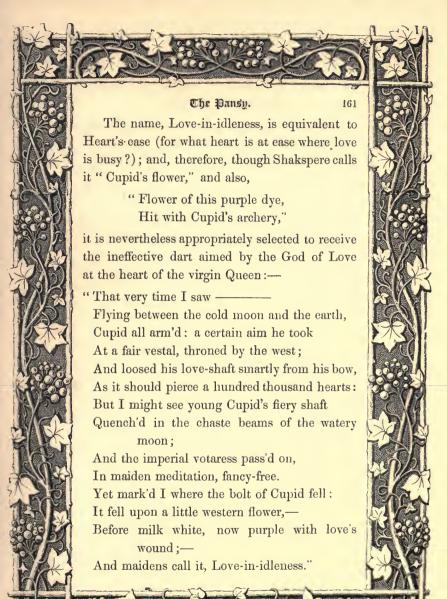
"The Pansie, Heartsease maidens call."

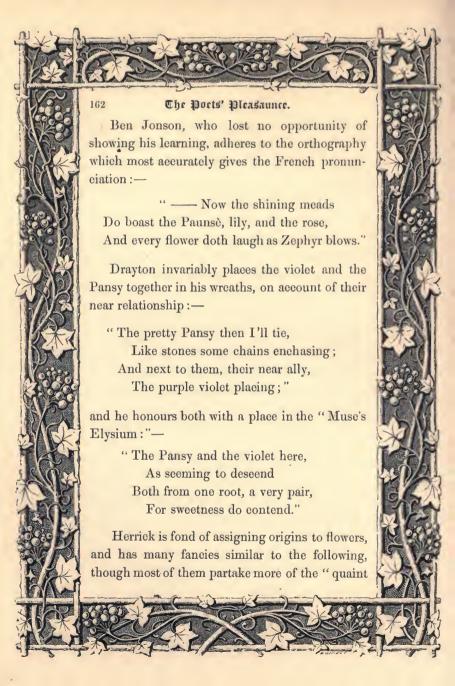
DRAYTON.

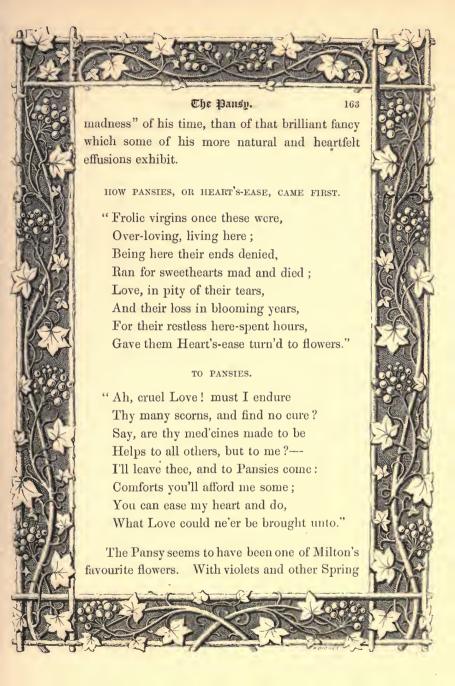


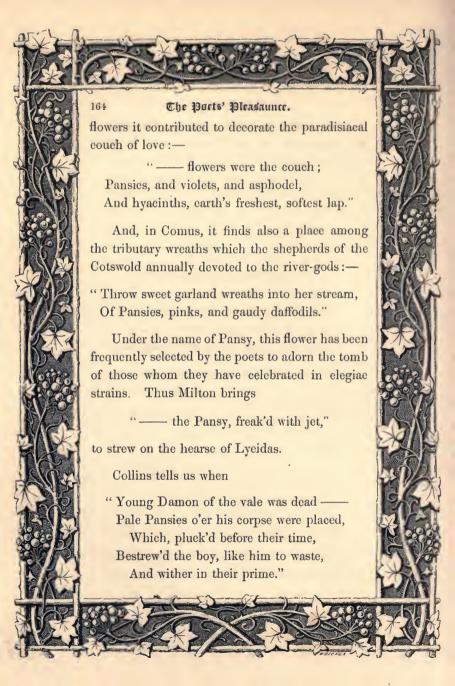


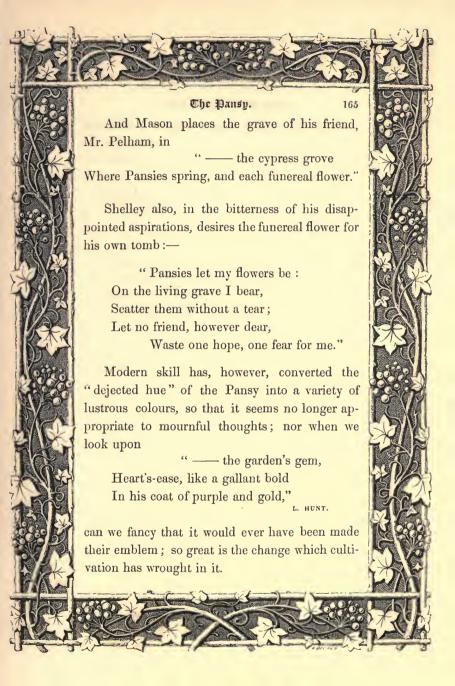


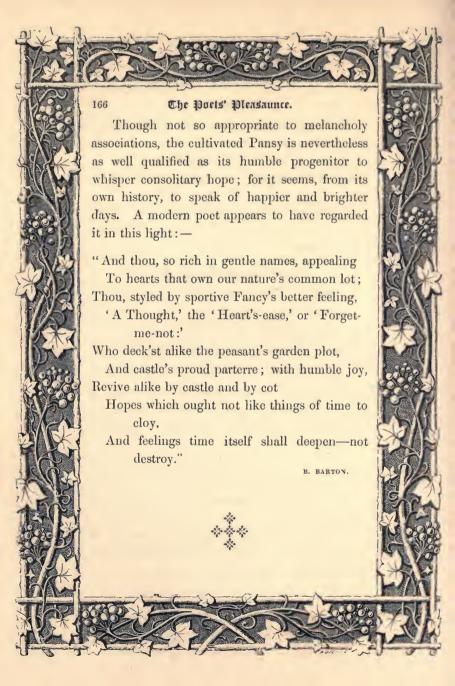
















The Dassodil.

NARCISSUS PSEUDO-NARCISSUS.

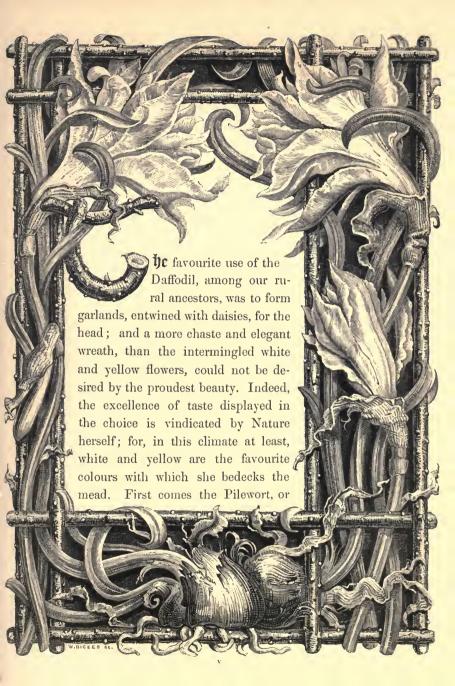


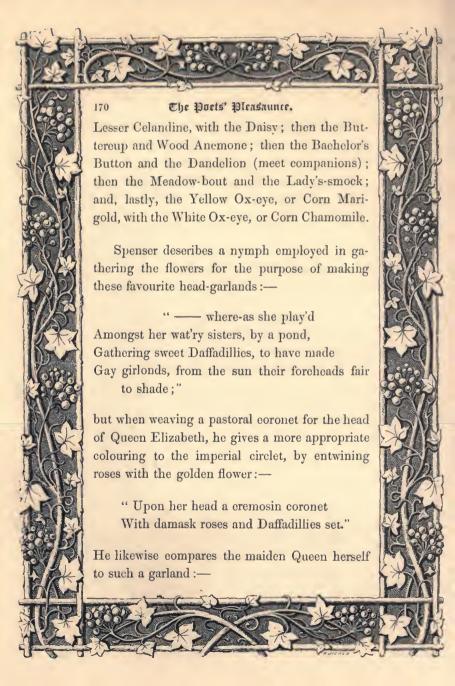


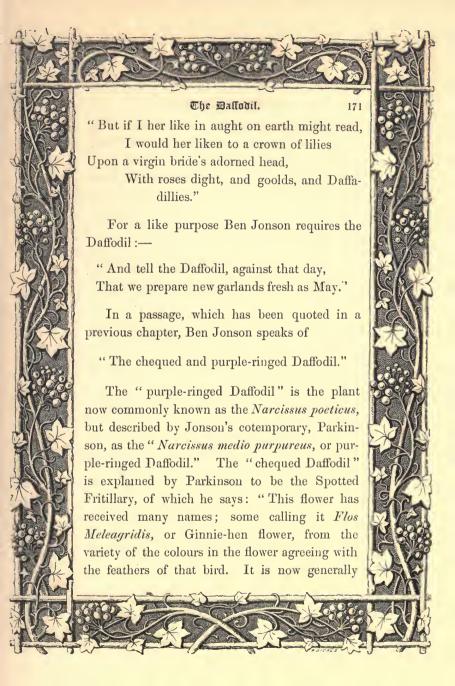
"Strew me the ground with Daffadowndillies, And cowslips, and kingeups, and loved lilies."

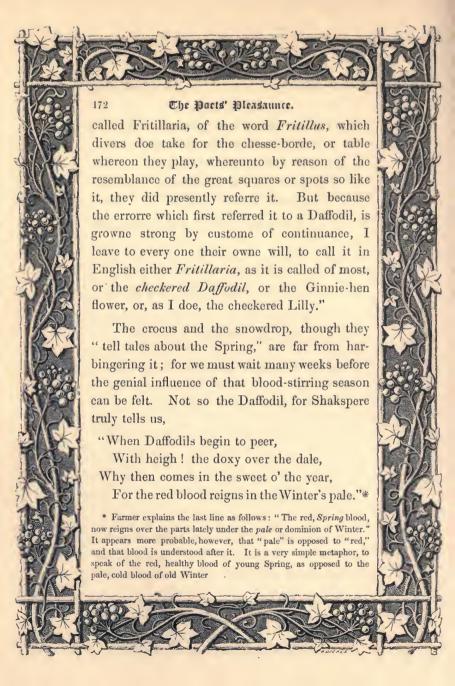
SPENSER

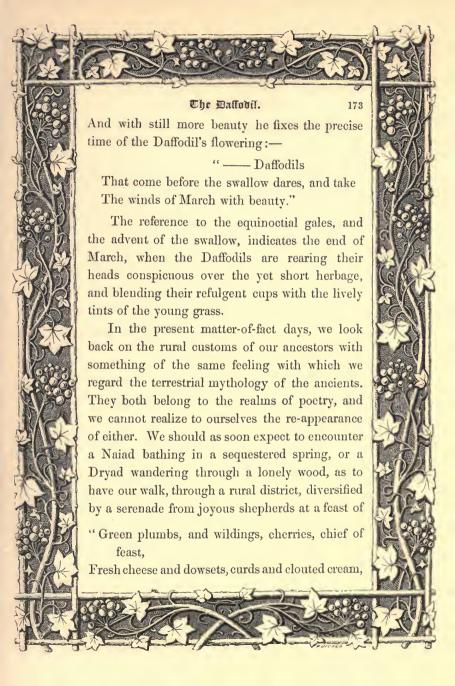


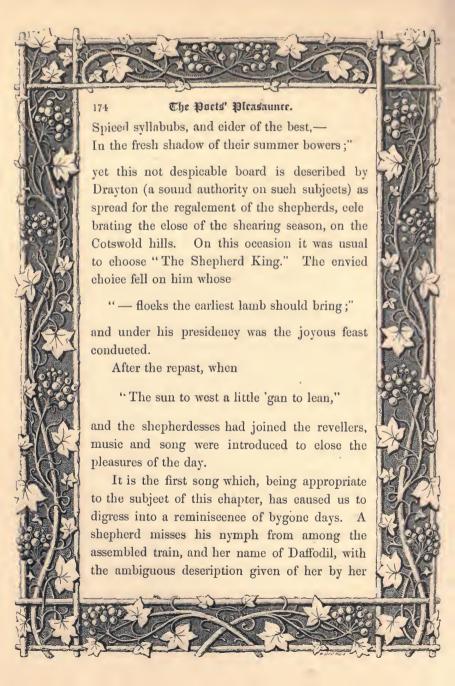


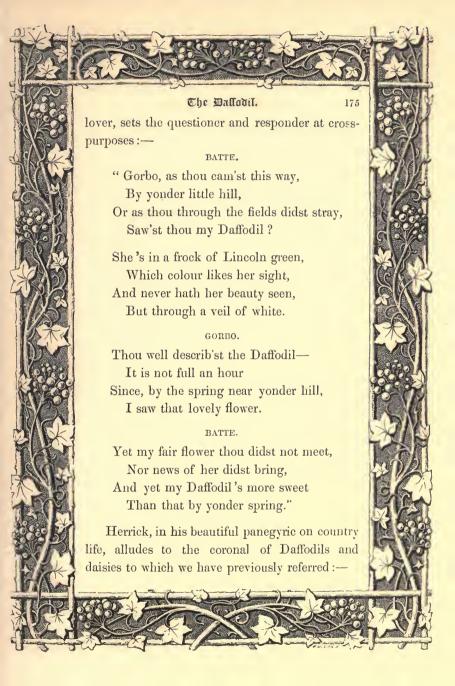


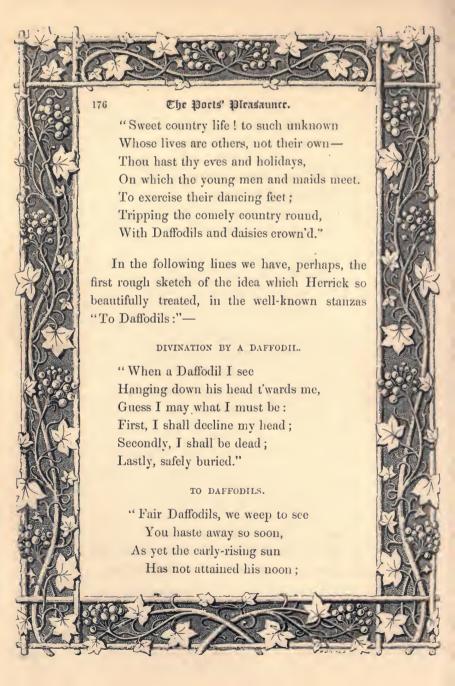














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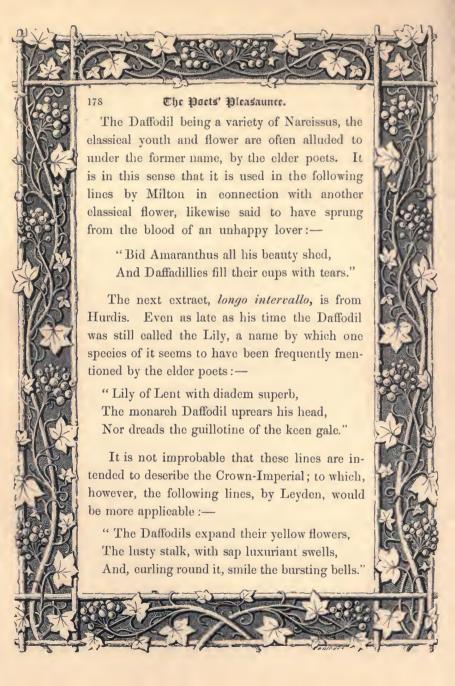
Stay, stay,
Until the hast'ning day
Has run,
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

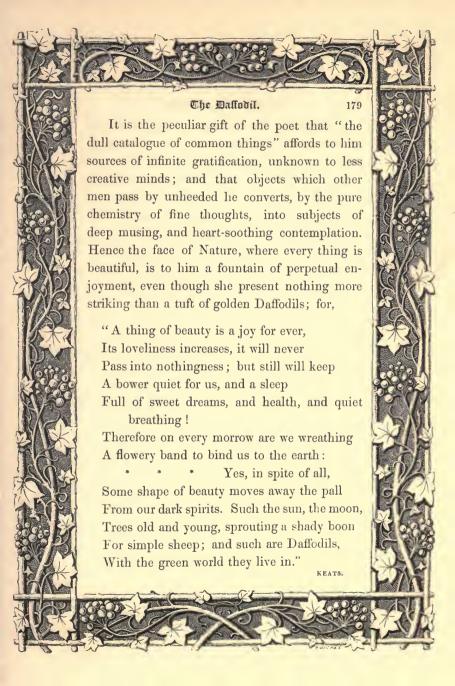
We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you or anything:
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the summer's rain,
Or as the pearls of morning dew,

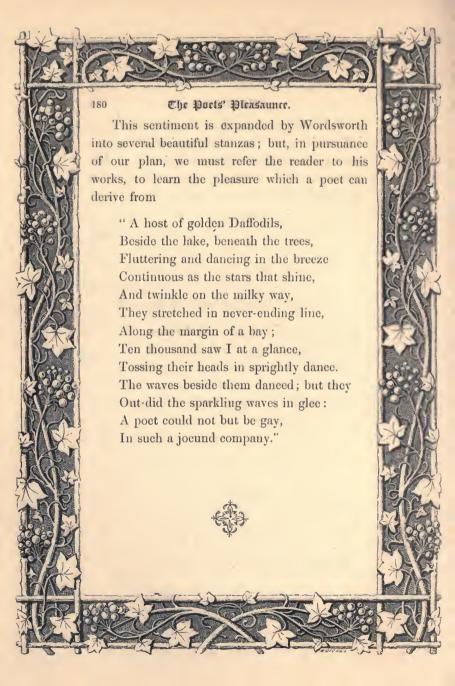
The festivities of the shearing season, on the banks of the Severn, described by Drayton, are also alluded to by Milton:—

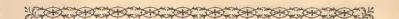
Ne'er to be found again."

"—— the shepherds at their festivals, Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays, And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream, Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy Daffodils."











The Anemone.

ANEMONE NEMOROSA.





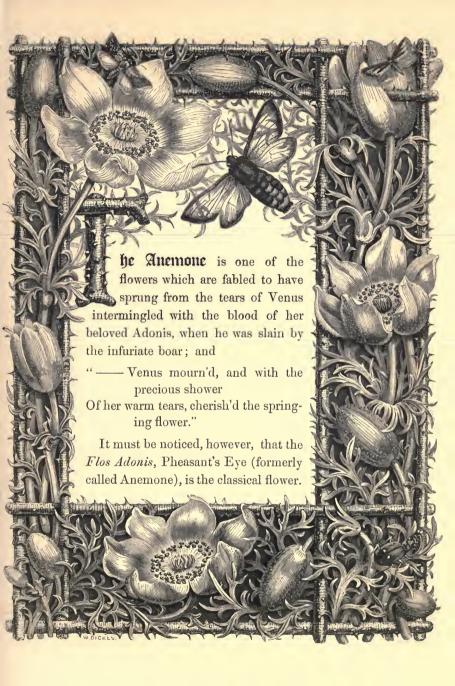
"The boy, with whom Love seem'd to die, Bleeds in this pale Anemone."

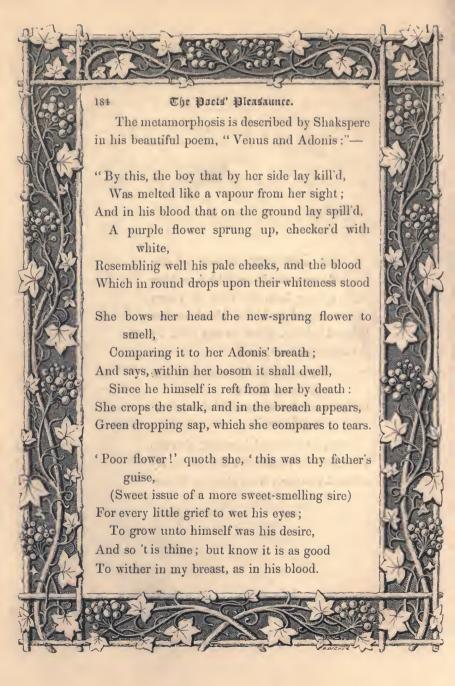
SANDYS.

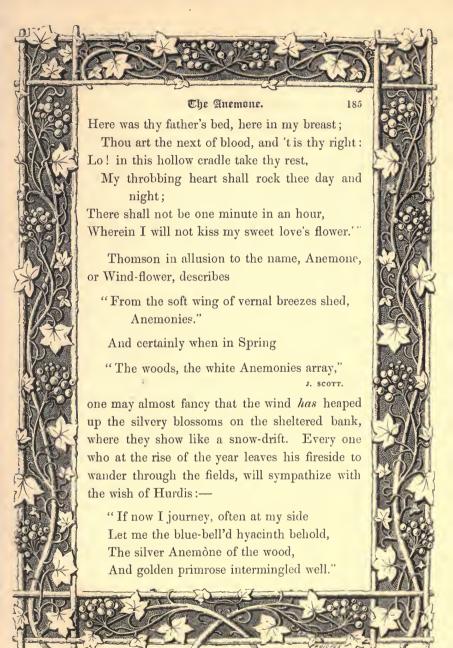
"—— The copse's pride, Anemones, With rays like golden studs on ivory laid Most delicate; but touch'd with purple clouds,— Fit crown for April's fair but changeful brow."

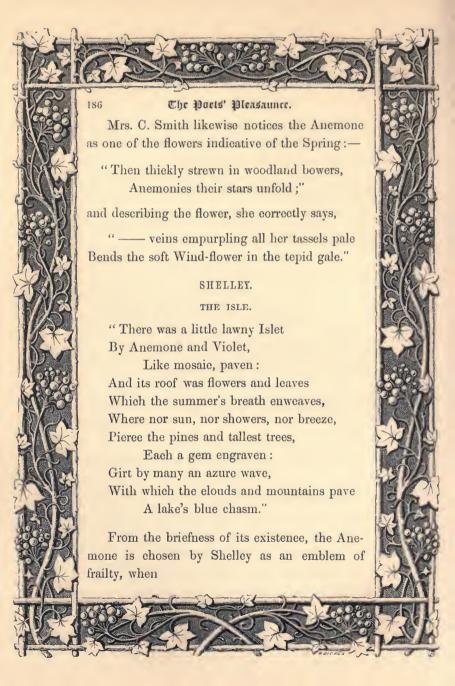
MRS. C. SMITH.

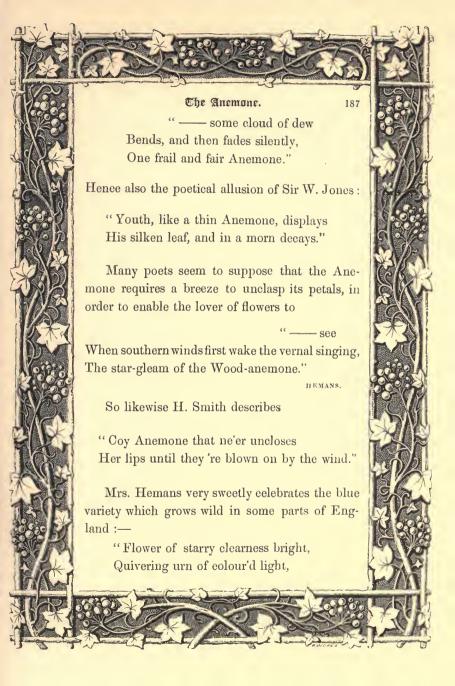


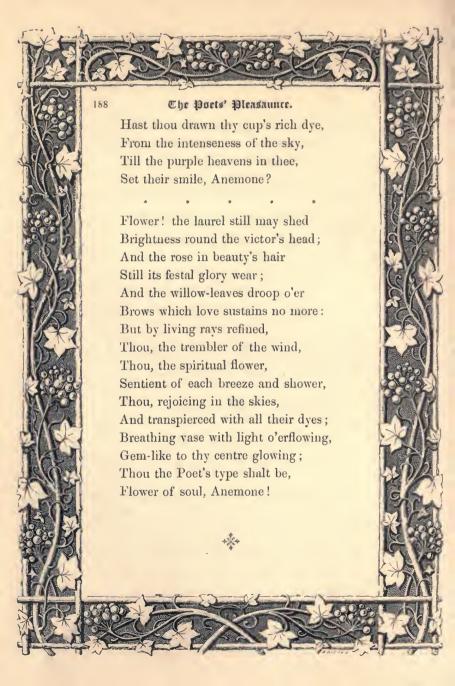


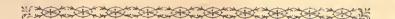














The Lily of the Valley.

CONVALLARIA MAIALIS.

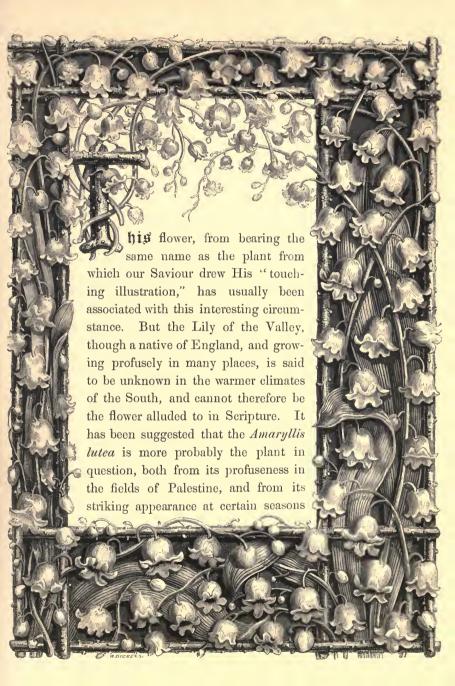


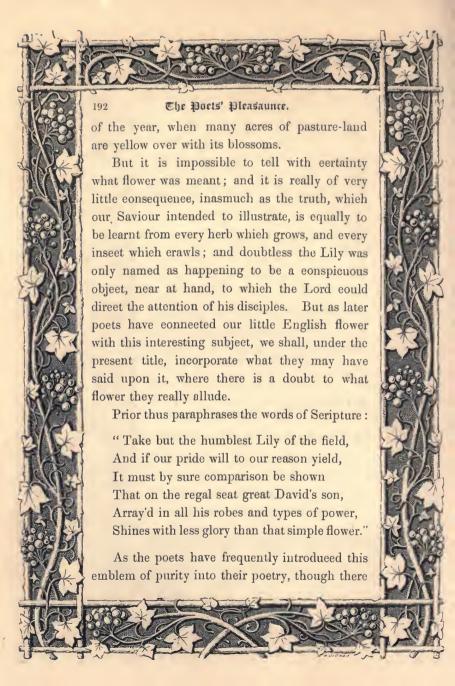


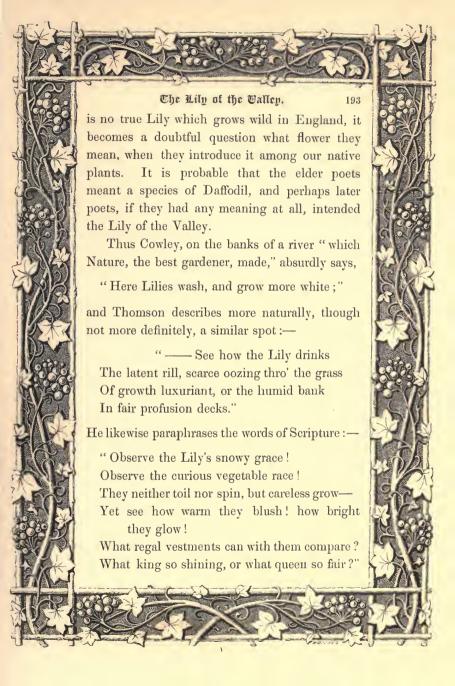
"The Lily, silver mistress of the vale."

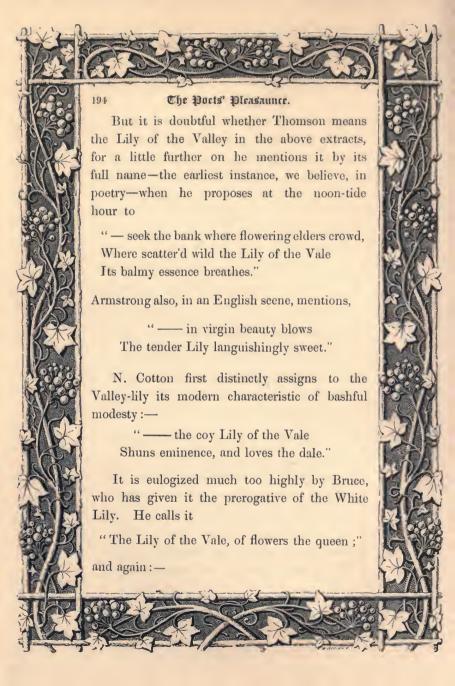
CHURCHILL.

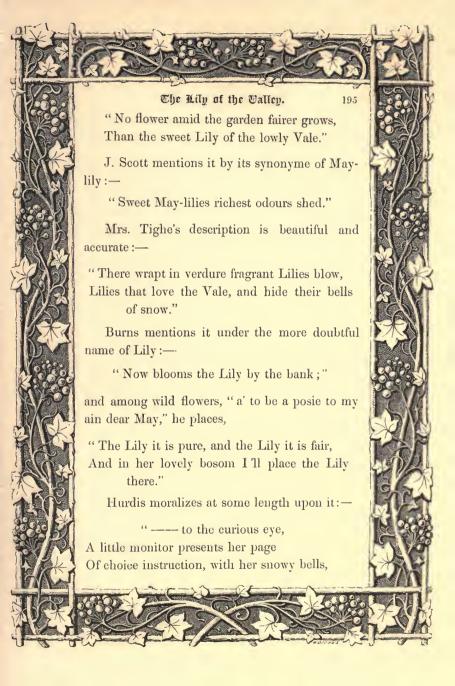


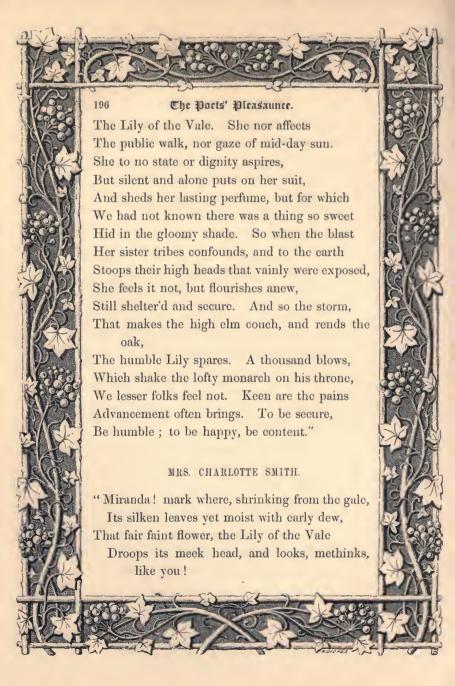


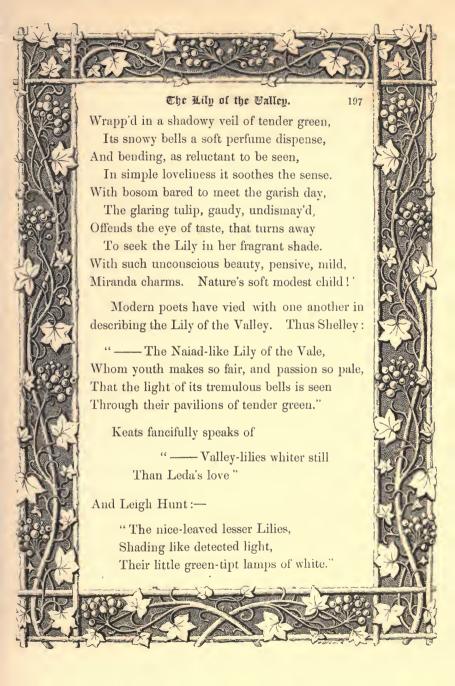


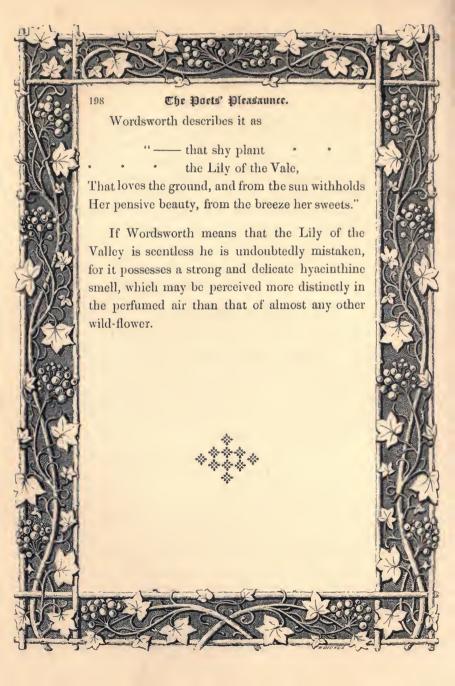
















The Wall-Flower.

CHEIRANTHUS FRUTICULOSUS.

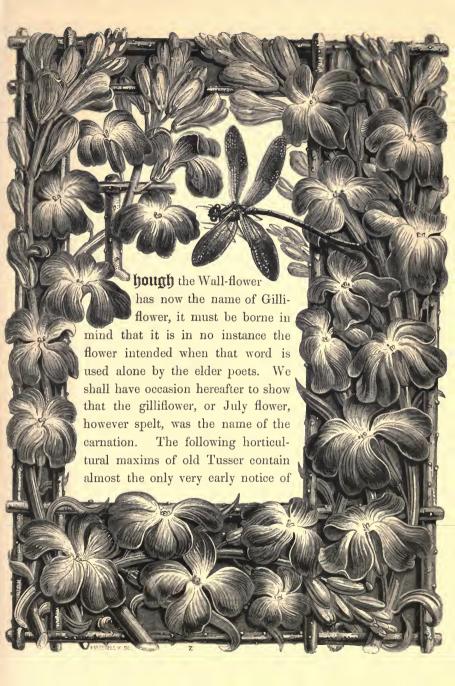


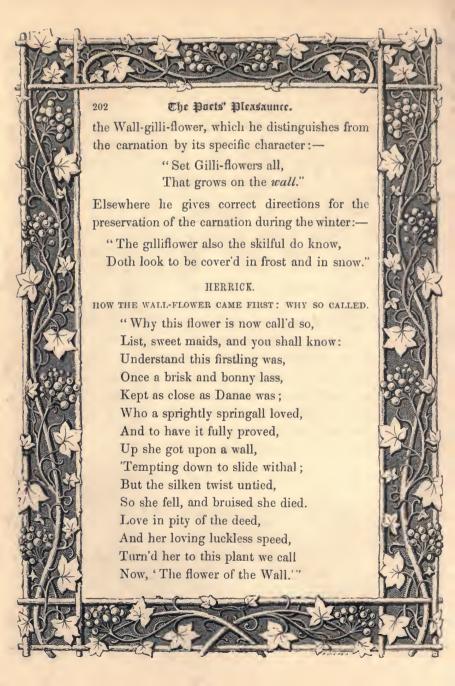


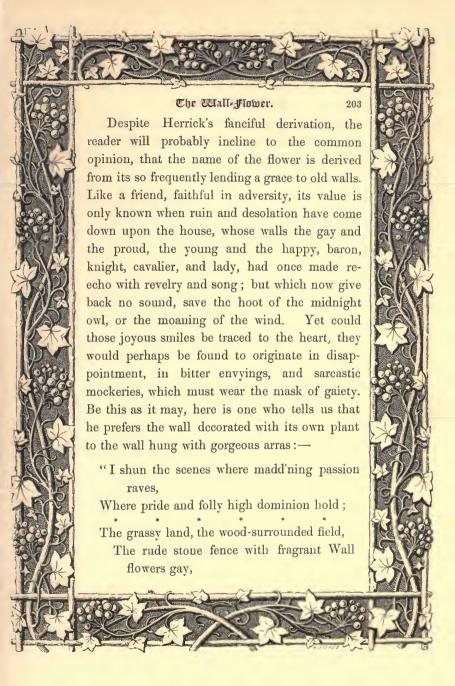
"The yellow Wall-flower stain'd with iron-brown."

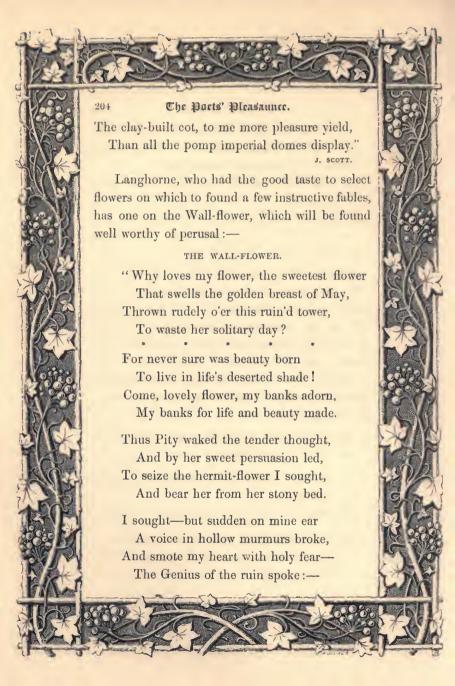
THOMSON.

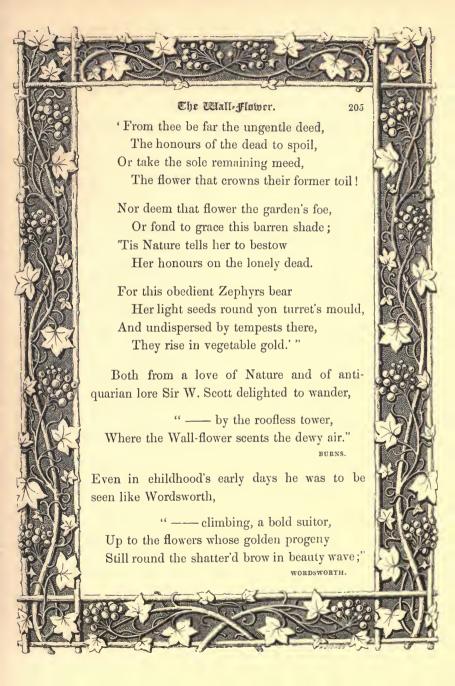


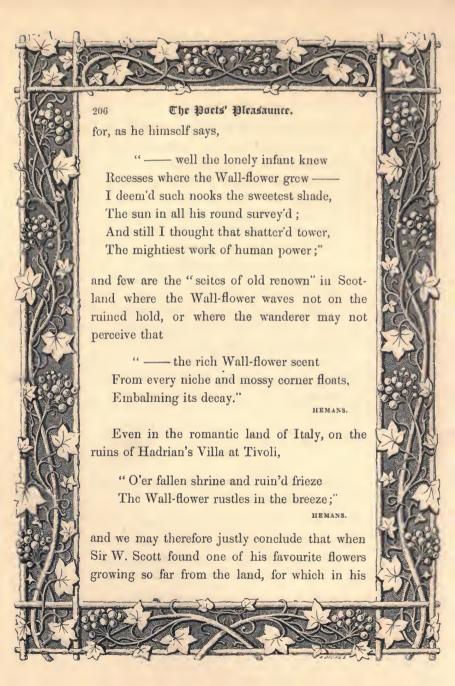


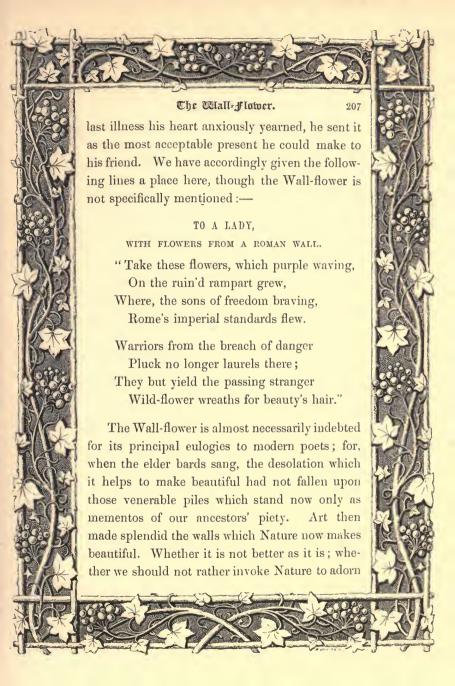


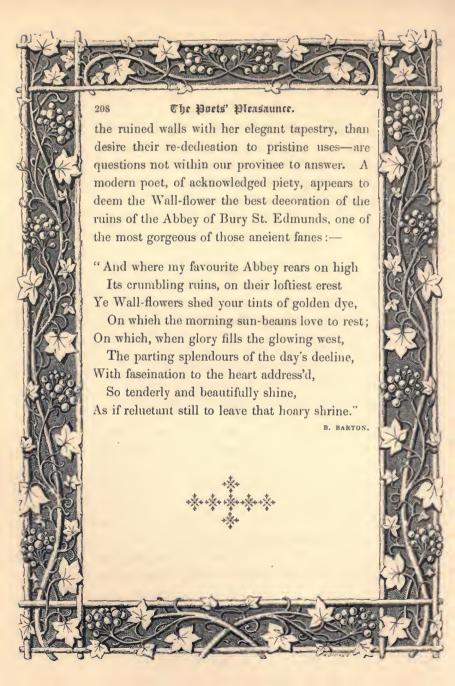
















The Hawthorn.

CRATÆGUS OXYACANTHA.

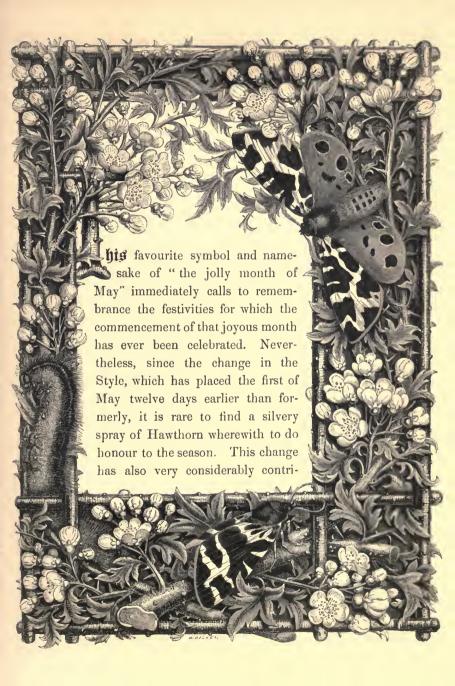


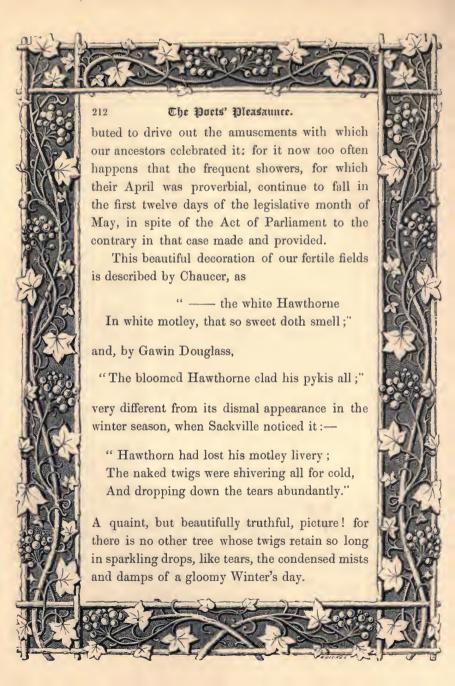


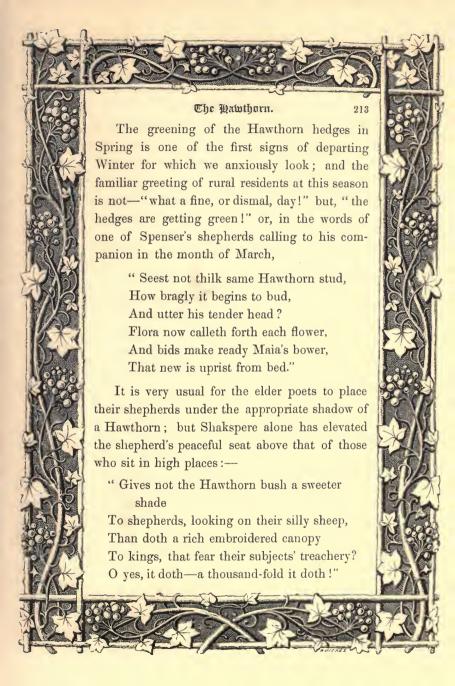
"And the Hawthorn every day Spreads some little show of May."

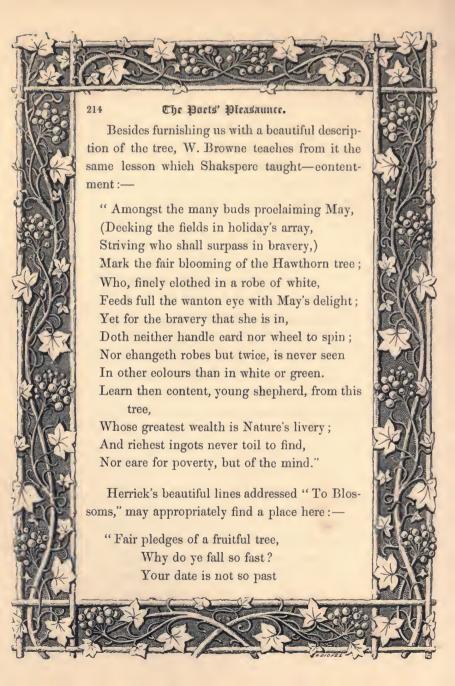
W. BROWNE.

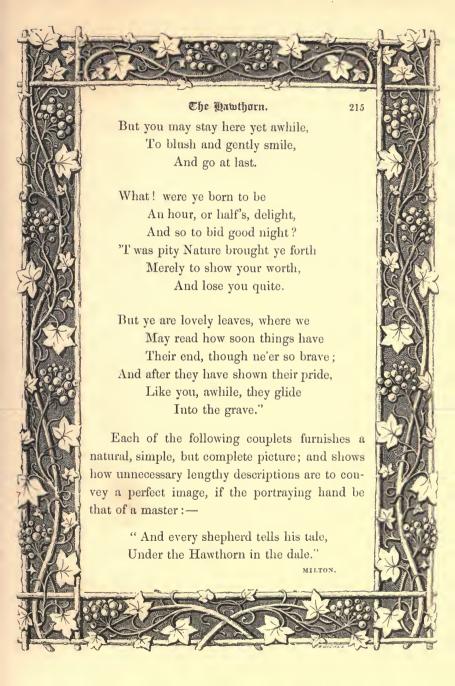


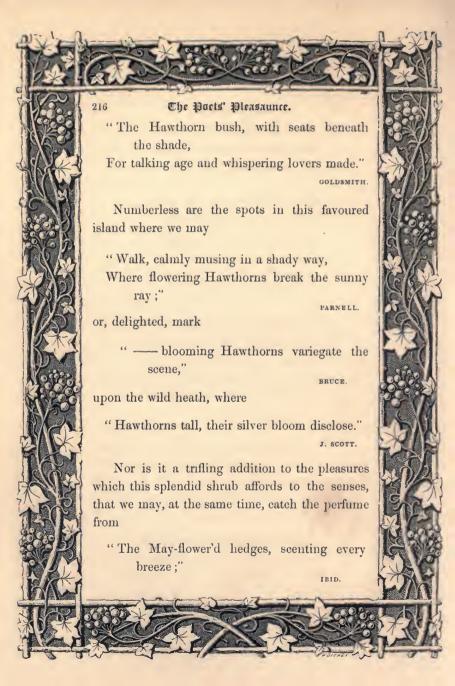


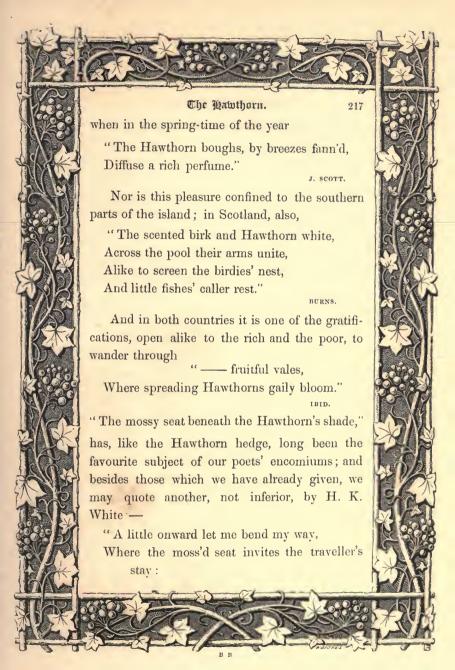


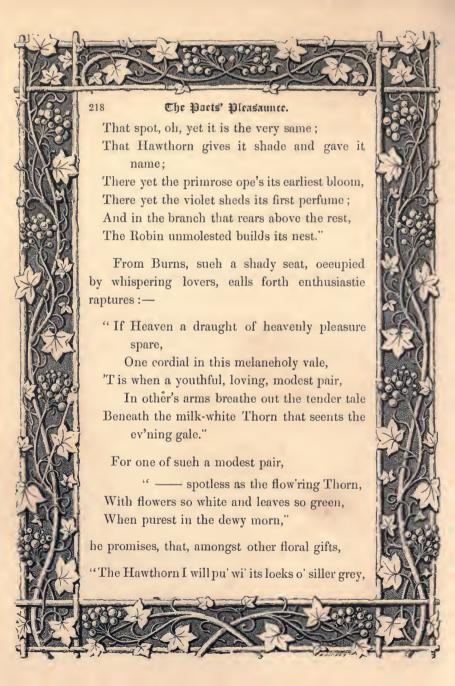


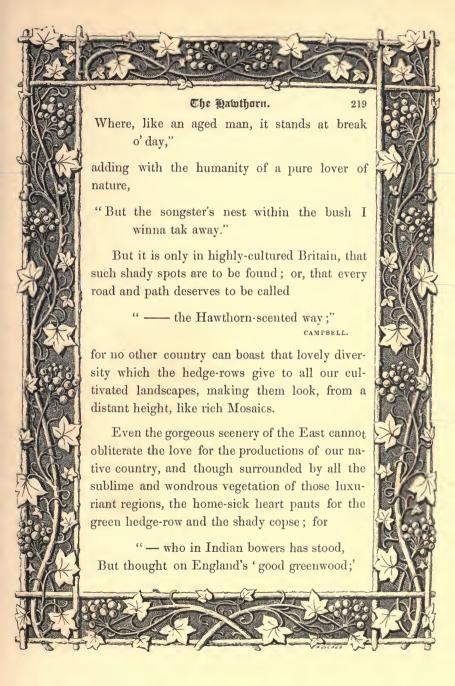


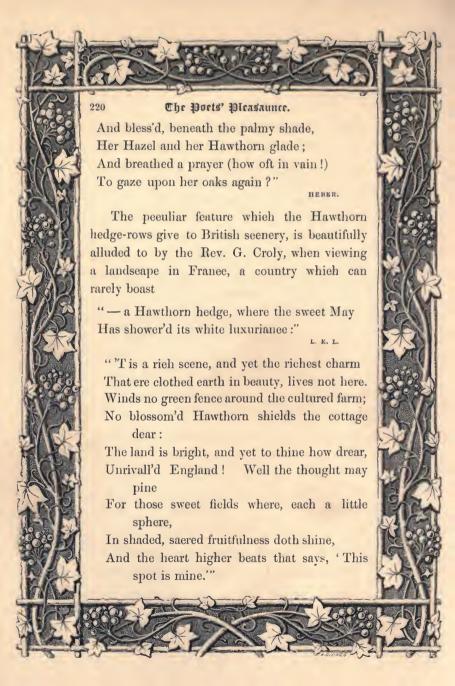


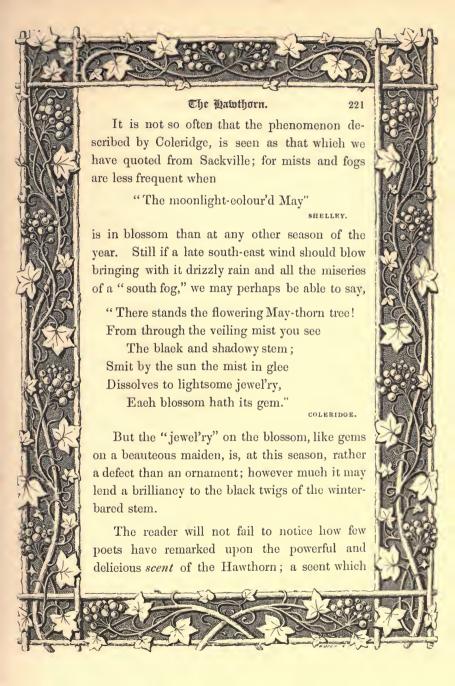


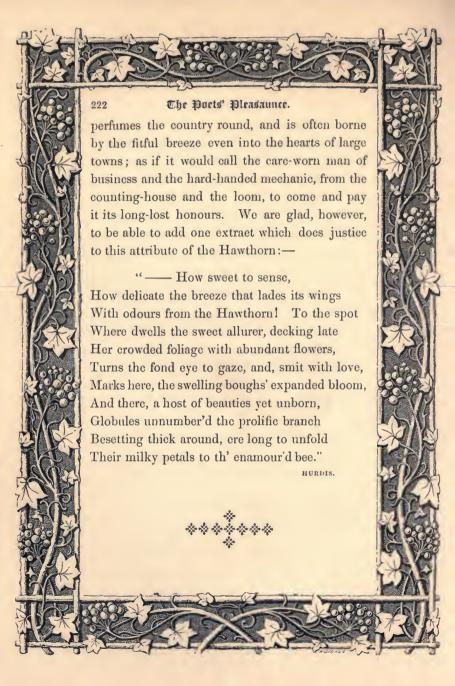
















The Tulip.

TULIPA GESNERIANA.

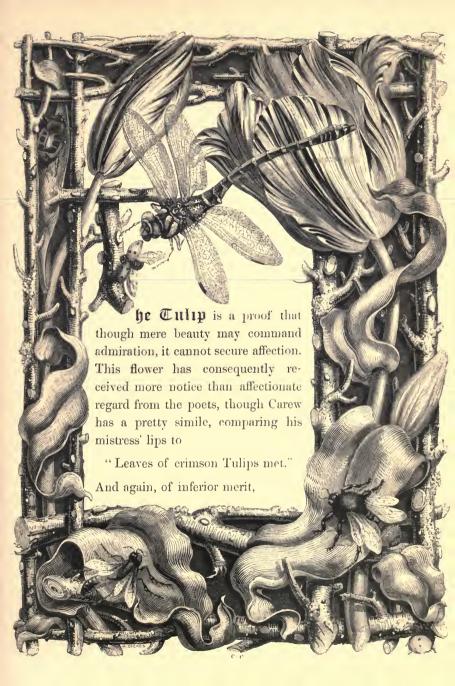


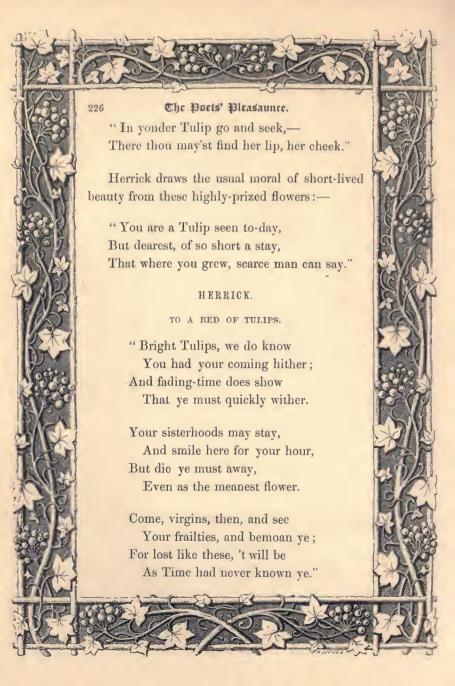


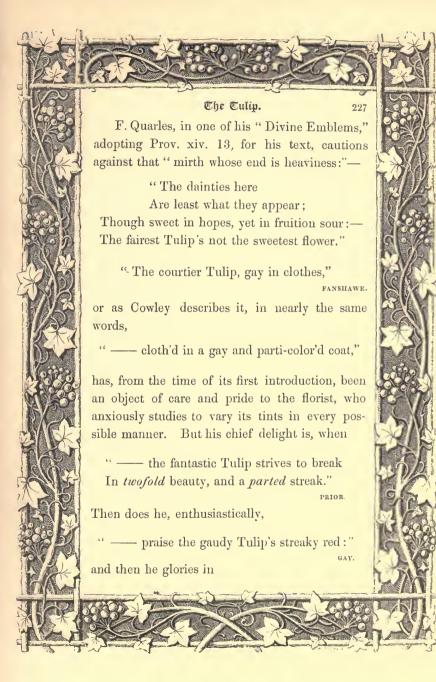
" In hundred-color'd silks the Tulip plays."

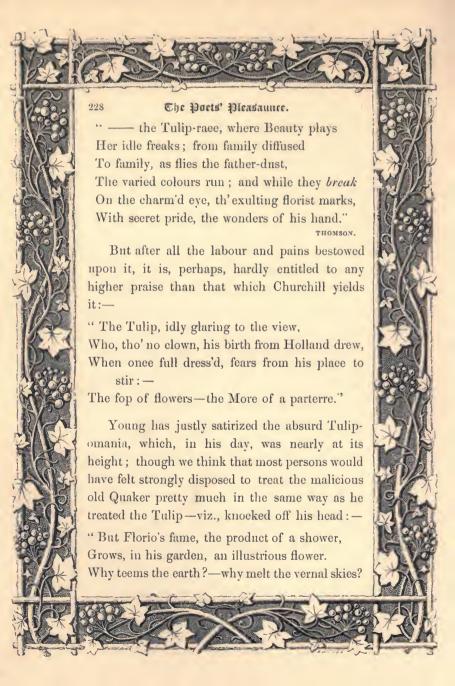
P. PLETCHER.













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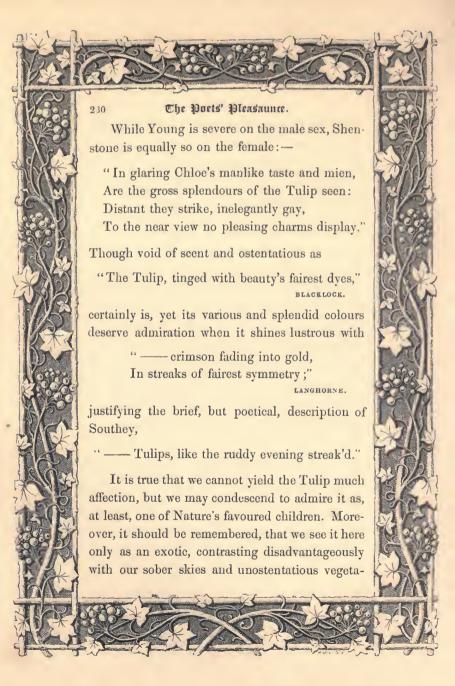
Why shines the sun?—to make Paul Diack* rise.
From morn to night has Florio gazing stood,
And wonder'd how the gods could be so good:—
What shape!—what hue! Was ever nymph so
fair?

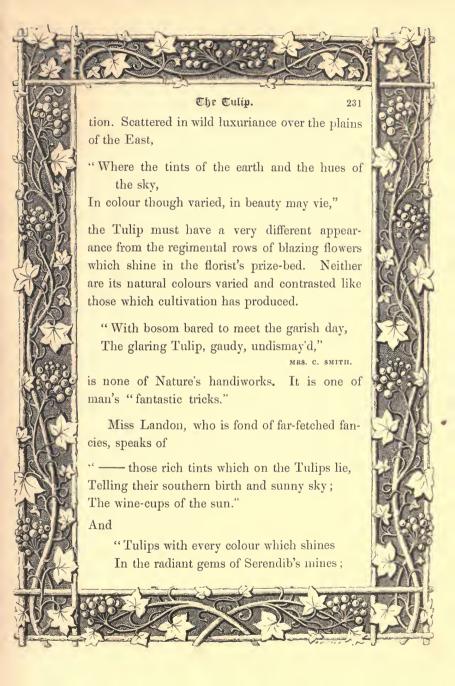
He doats! he dies!—he, too, is rooted there.
O solid bliss, which nothing can destroy,—
Except a cat, bird, snail, or idle boy.
In Fame's full bloom lies Florio down at night,
And wakes, next day, a most inglorious wight:—
The Tulip's dead!——

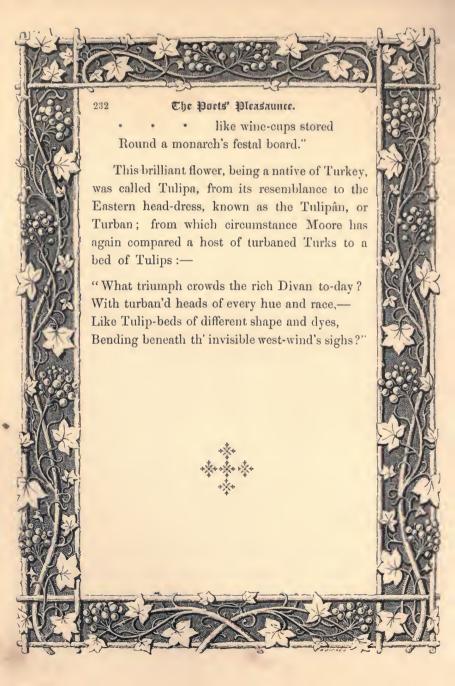
Nor are those enemies I mention'd, all;
Beware, O Florist, thy ambition's fall.
A friend of mine indulged this noble flame;
A Quaker served him, Adam was his name;
To one loved Tulip oft the master went,
Hung o'er it, and whole days in rapture spent;
But came, and miss'd it one ill-fated hour:
He raged! he roar'd! 'What demon cropt my flower?'

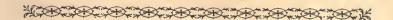
Serene, quoth Adam, 'Lo!'t was crush'd by me; Fallen is the Baal to which thou bow'dst thy knee.'"

* The name of a Tulip.









*

Hyacinths.

9

Keren karangan kerengan kereng



LILIUM MARTAGON.

"—— Hyaeinths, which grow With marks of grief."

DRUMMOND.



HYACINTHUS NON-SCRIPTUS, seu, SCILLA NUTANS.

"Shaded Hyacinth alway Sapphire Queen of the mid-May."

KEATS.

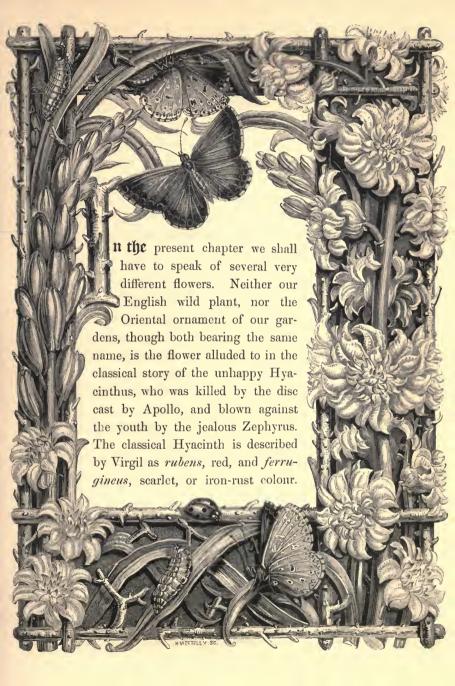


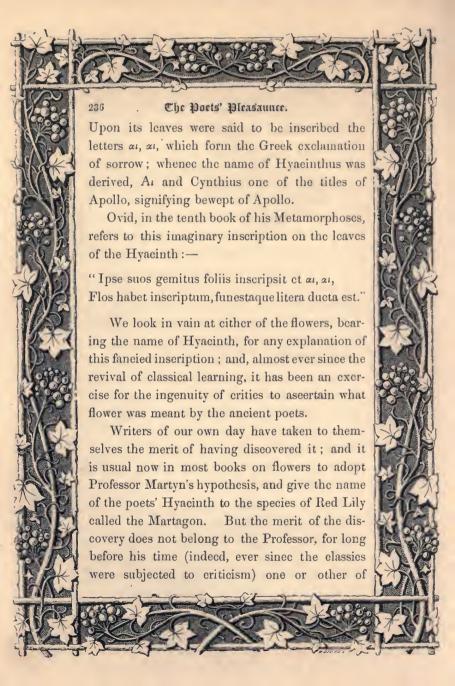
HYACINTHUS ORIENTALIS.

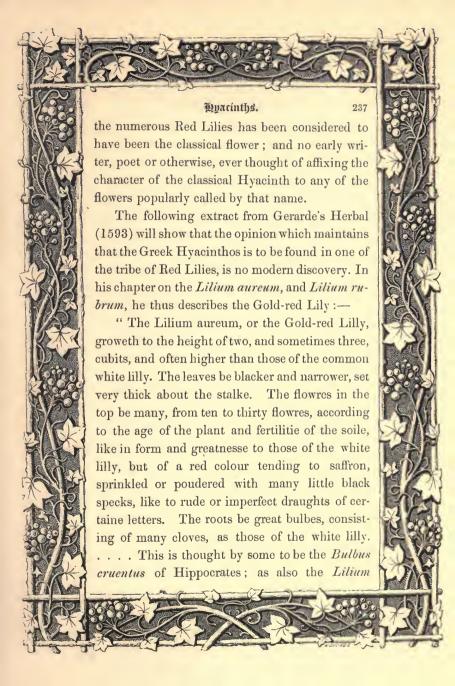
" Hyacinths with their graceful bells, Where the spirit of odour dwells, Like the spirit of music in ocean-shells."

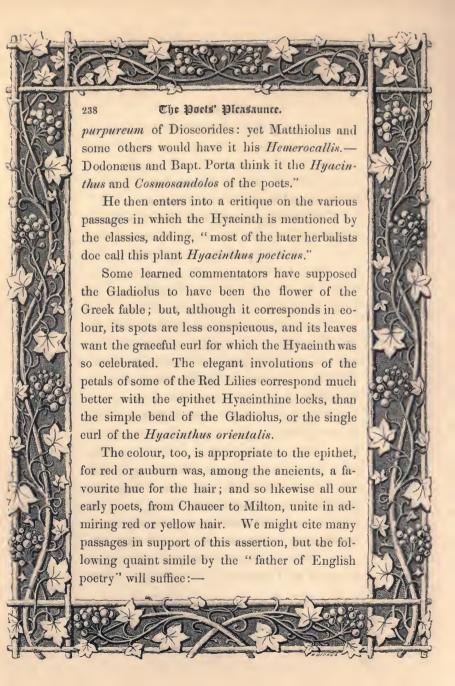
L. E. L.

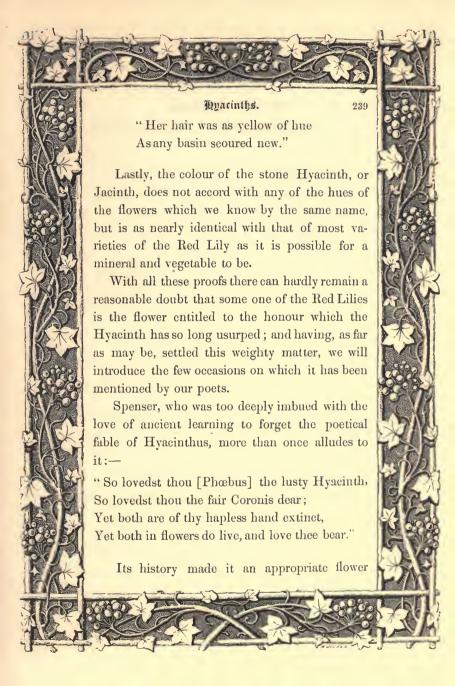


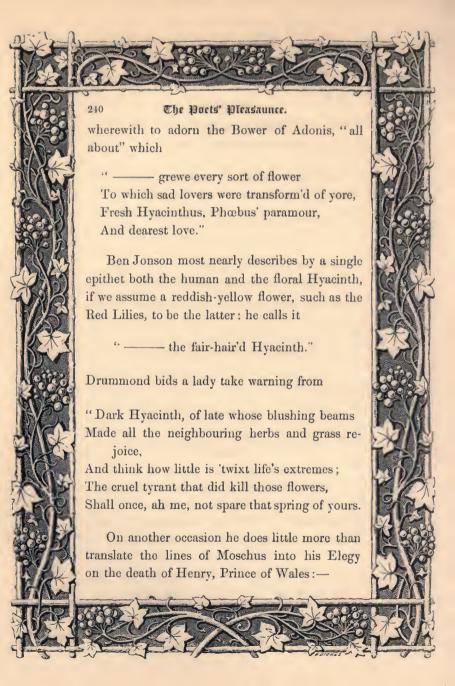














Myacinths.

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"O Hyacinths! for ay, your AI keep still, Nay, with more marks of woe your leaves now fill."

In the same Elegy he again mentions the classical Hyacinth, as

"—— that sweet flower that bears
In sanguine spots the tenor of our woes."

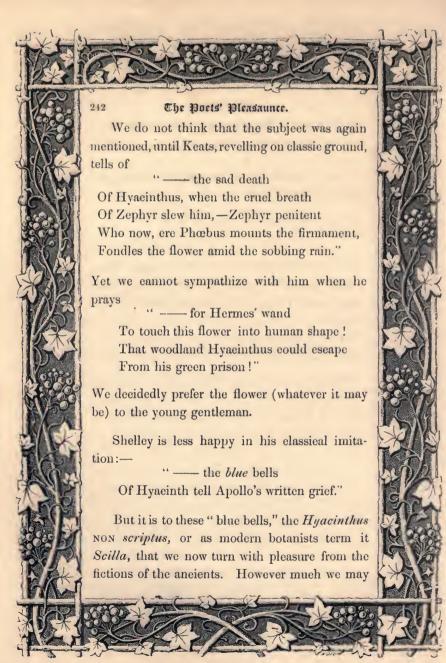
Lines which Milton adopted, but at the same time corrected, by transferring the epithet "sanguine" from the spots (which are black) to the flower:—

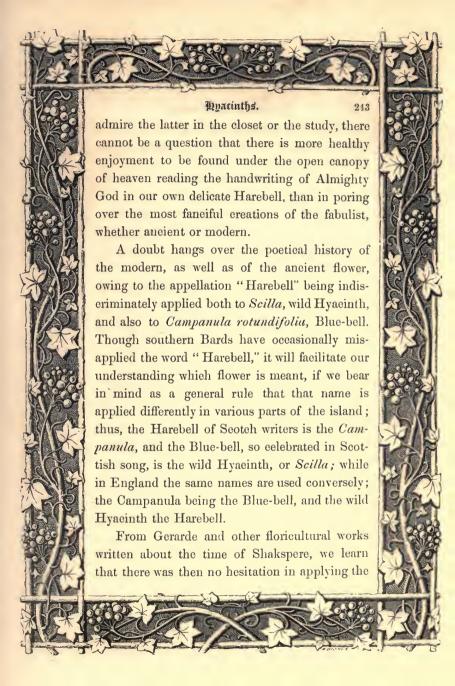
"--- that sanguine flower inscribed with woe."

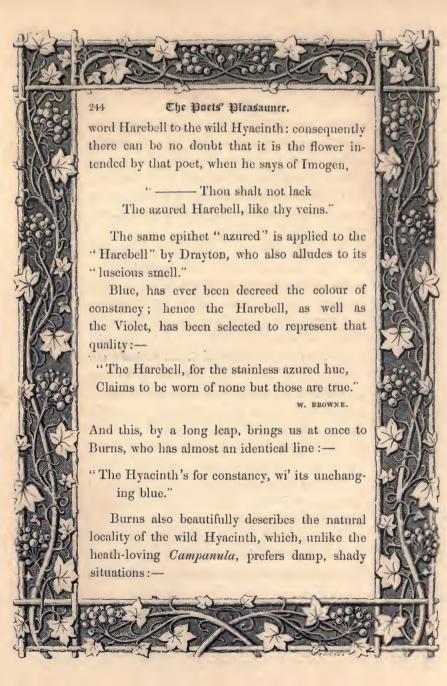
Milton seems to have been aware that the "flower inscribed with woe" was not that which is popularly termed the Hyacinth, for in every instance in which he introduces that name, he evidently means our English Harebell.

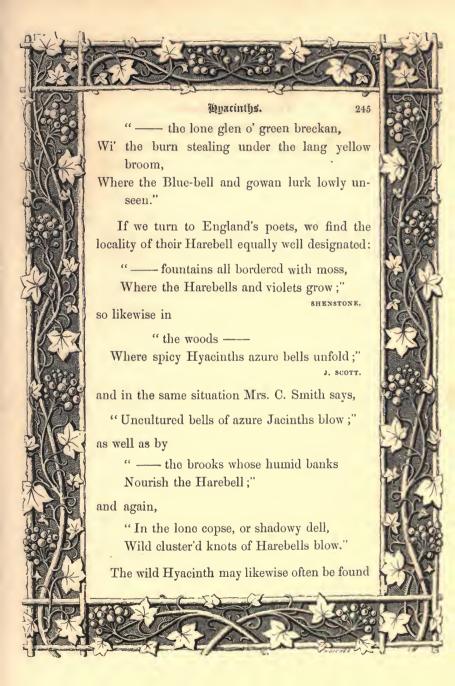
In Parnell we find an instance of the ignorance of flowers which prevailed in the eighteenth century, and caused the signification of many (like the Hyacinth) to be lost. Describing several classical plants, he says,

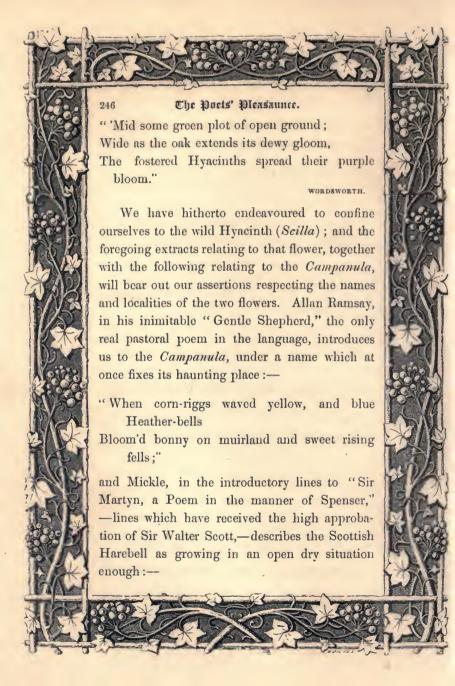
"In bells of azure, Hyacinth arose."

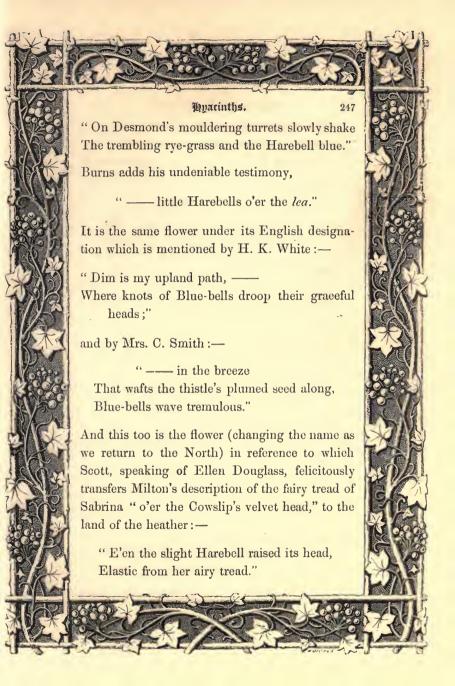


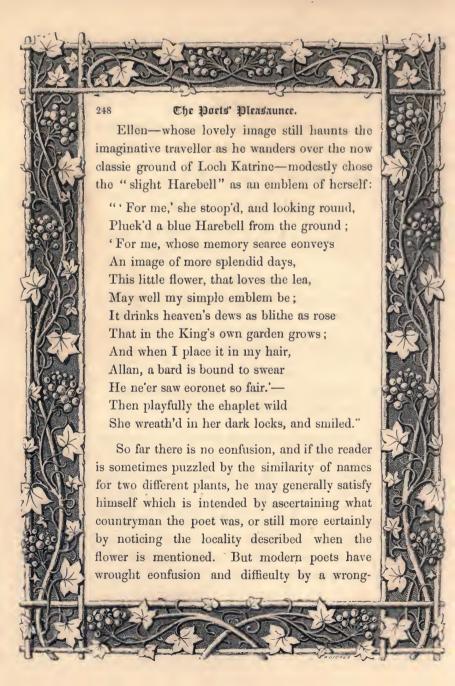


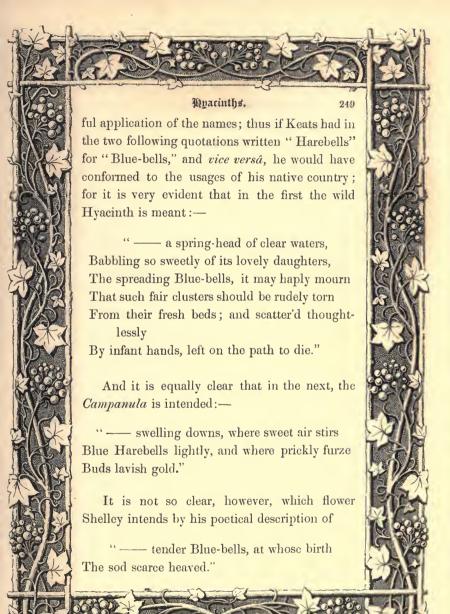


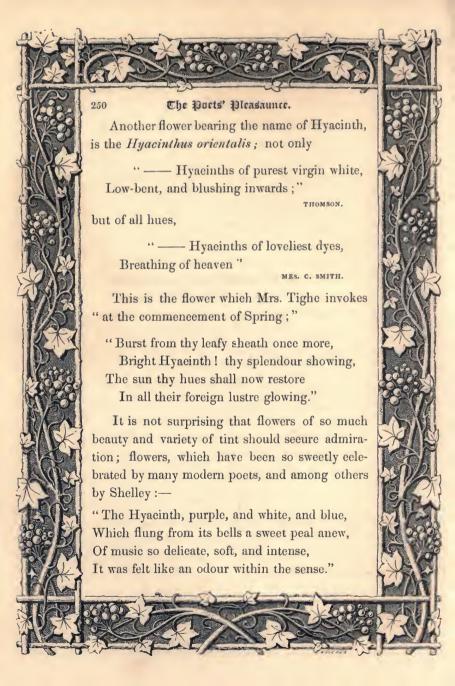


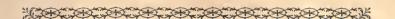














The Marcissus.

NARCISSUS POETICUS.





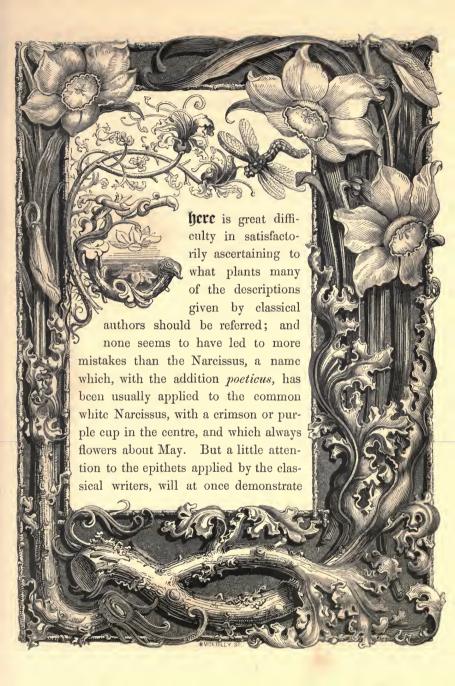
"—— Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still."

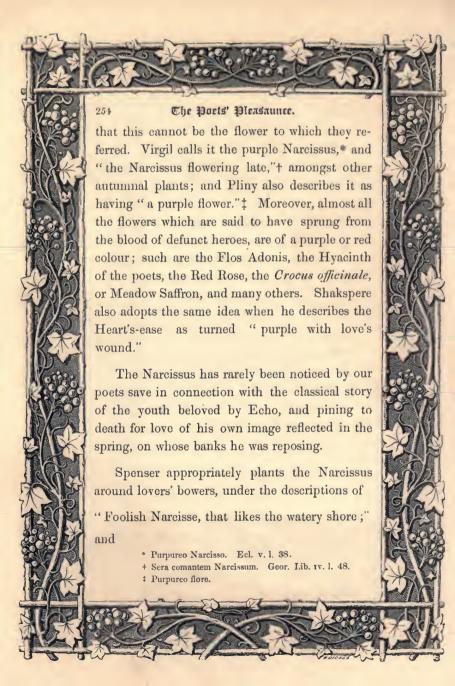
THOMSON.

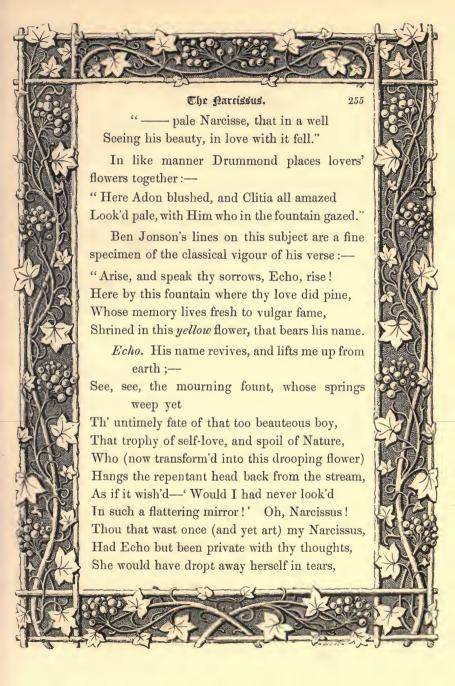
"—— Narcissi, the fairest among them all, Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess, Till they die of their own dear loveliness."

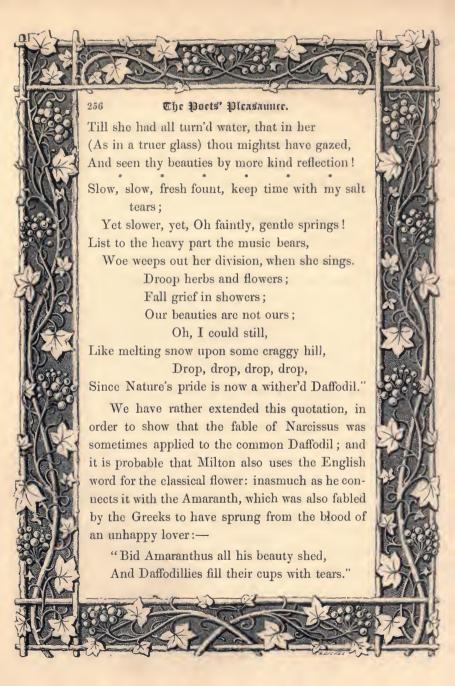
SHELLEY.

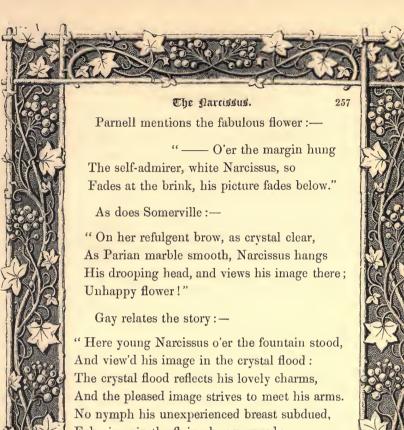






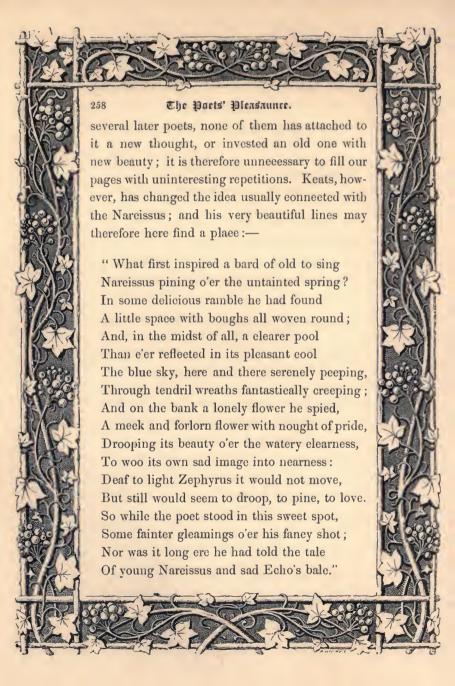


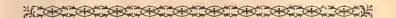




"Here young Narcissus o'er the fountain stood,
And view'd his image in the crystal flood:
The crystal flood reflects his lovely charms,
And the pleased image strives to meet his arms.
No nymph his unexperienced breast subdued,
Echo in vain the flying boy pursued;
Himself alone, the foolish youth admires,
And with fond look the smiling shade desires;
O'er the smooth lake with fruitless tears he grieves,
His spreading fingers shoot in verdant leaves,
Through his pale veins green sap now gently flows,
And in a short-lived flower his beauty blows."

Although the fable has been alluded to by







The Broom.

SPARTIUM SCOPARIUM.

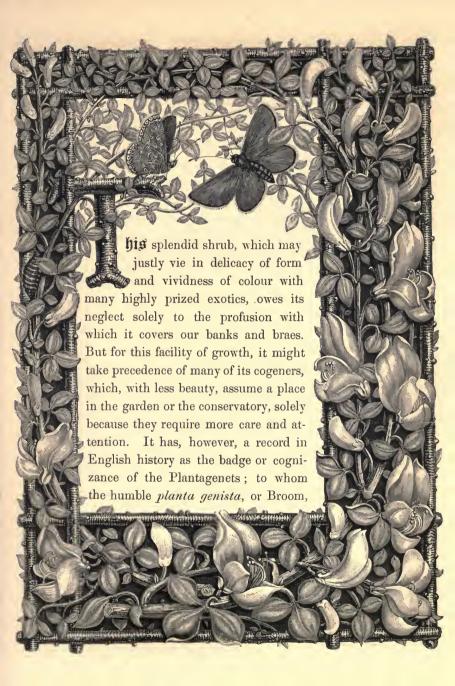


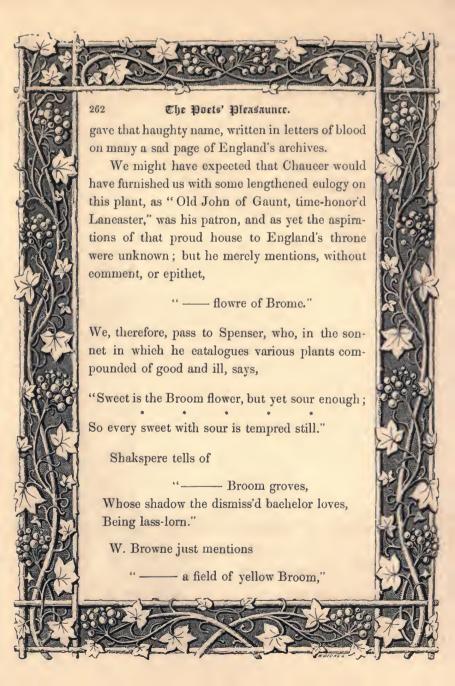


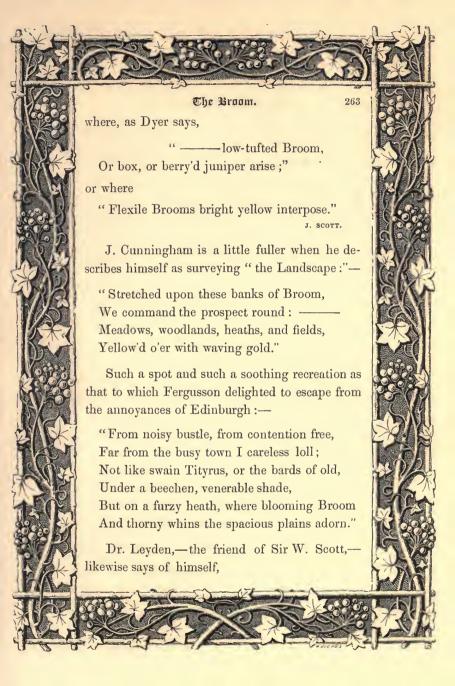
" O'er the fields of waving Broom, Slowly shoots the golden bloom."

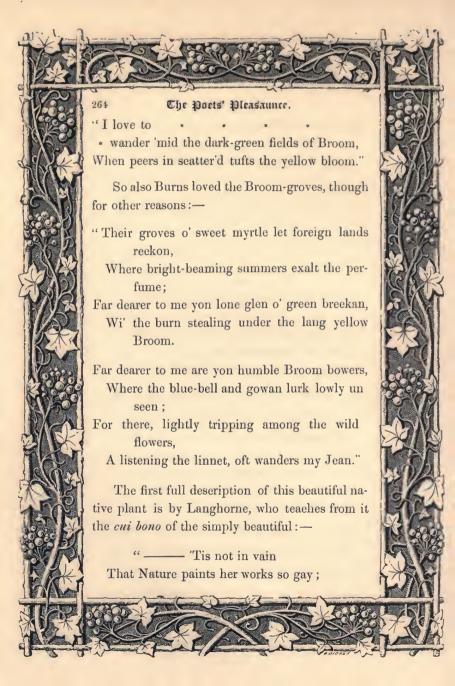
J. WARTON.

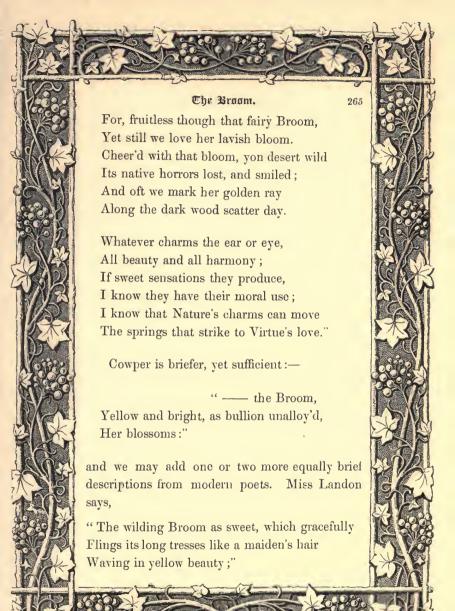


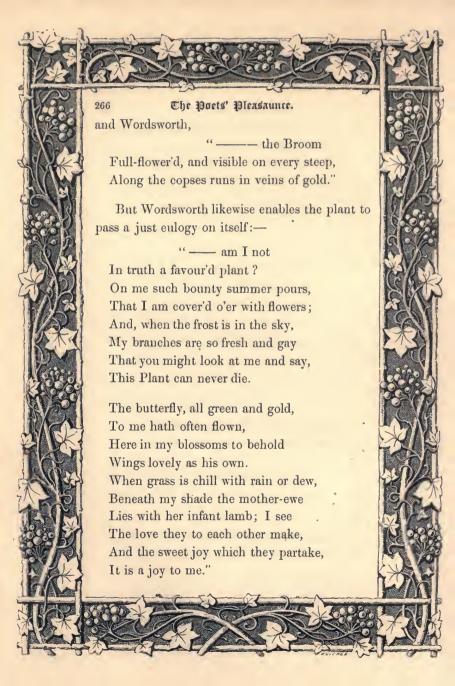
















The Rose.

ROSA.

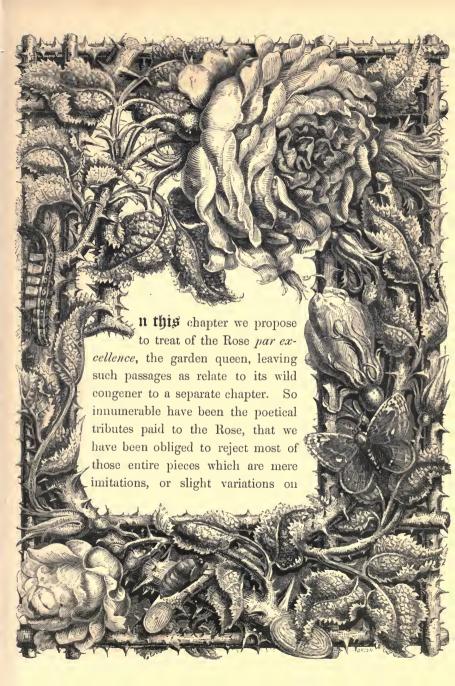


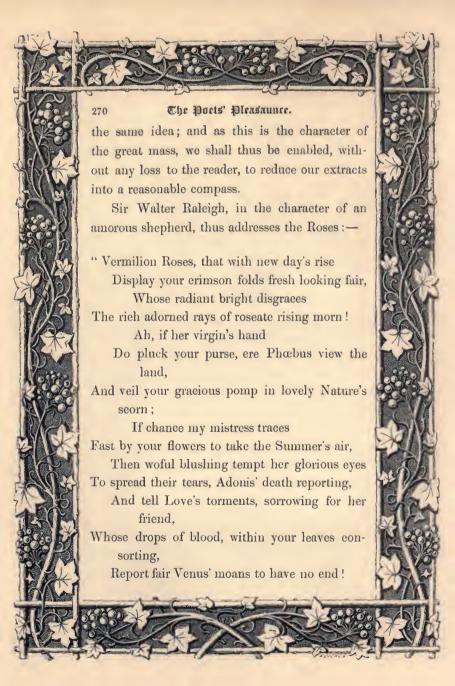


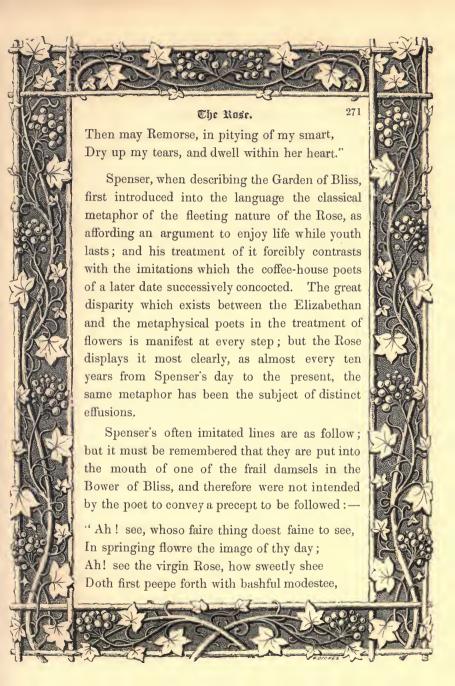
"A costly crown with clarified stonis bright,
This comely Queen did on head inclose,
While all the land illumyned of the light;
Wherefore me thought the flowers did rejoice,
Crying attonis, 'Hail be thou richest Rose!
Hail herbis' Empress, hail freshest Queen of Flowers,
To thee be glory and honor at all hours.'"

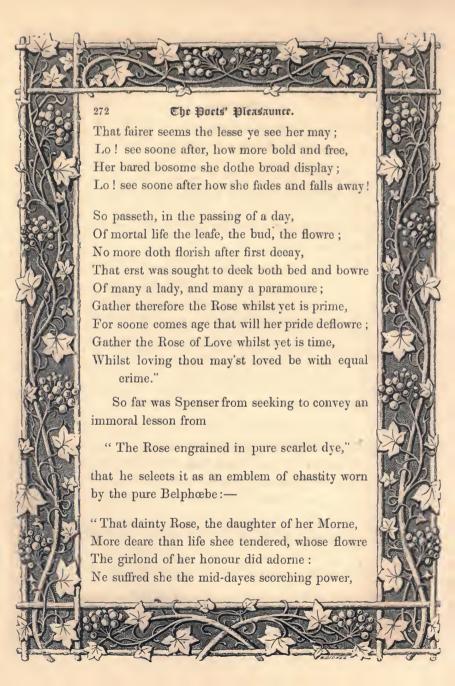
DUNBAR.













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Ne the sharp northerne wind thereon to showre, But lapped up her silken leaves most chaire, When-so the froward sky began to lowre: But soon as calmed was the crystall ayre, She did it faire disspred, and let to florish faire."

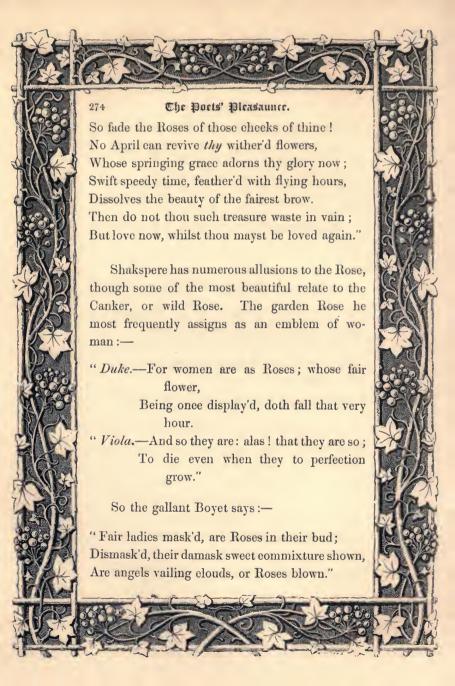
How exquisitely beautiful, too, is the following descriptive simile:—

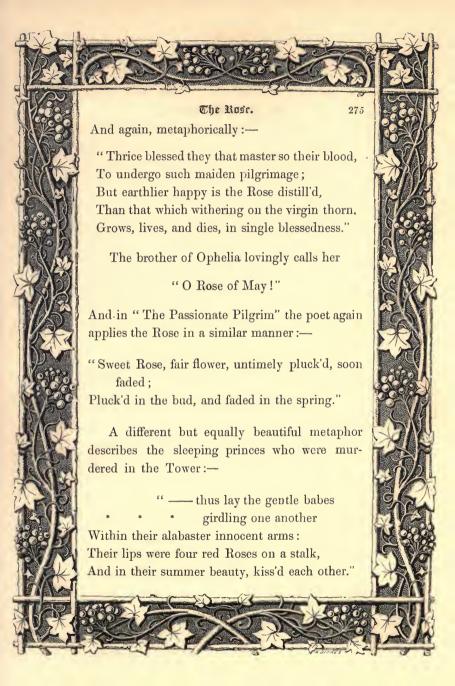
"Like as a tender Rose in open plaine,
That with untimely drought nigh wither'd was,
And hung the head, soon as few drops of raine
Thereon distill and dew her dainty face,
'Gins to look up, and with fresh wonted grace
Dispreads the glory of her leaves gay;
Such was Irena's countenance."

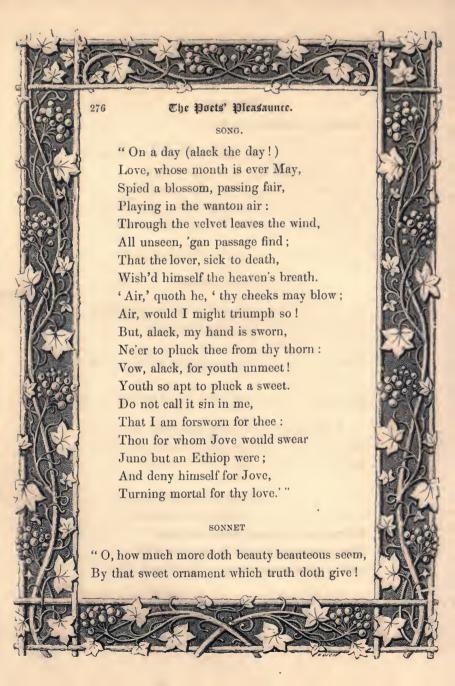
DANIEL.

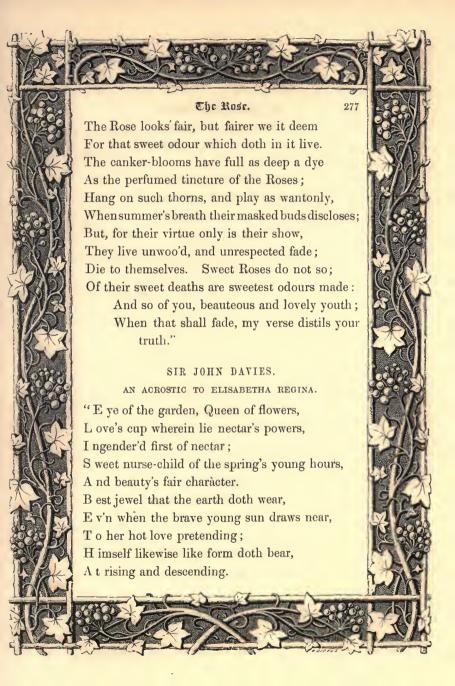
"Look, Delia, how w' esteem the half-blown Rose,
The image of thy blush and summer's honor!
Whilst yet her tender bud doth undisclose
That full of beauty time bestows upon her.
No sooner spreads her glory in the air,
But straight her wide-blown pomp comes to decline;

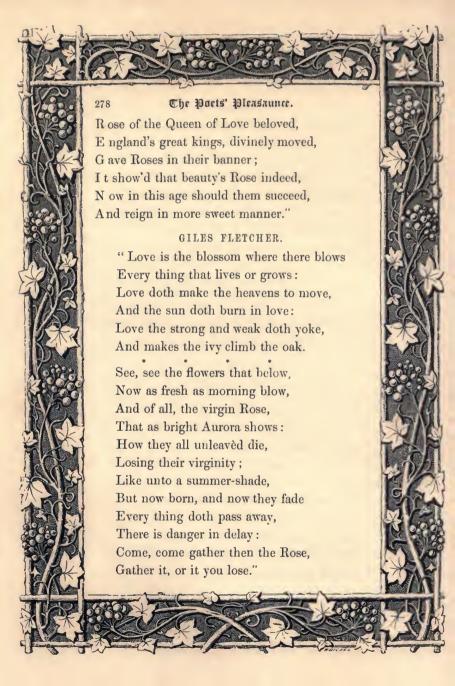
She then is scorn'd that late adorn'd the fair:

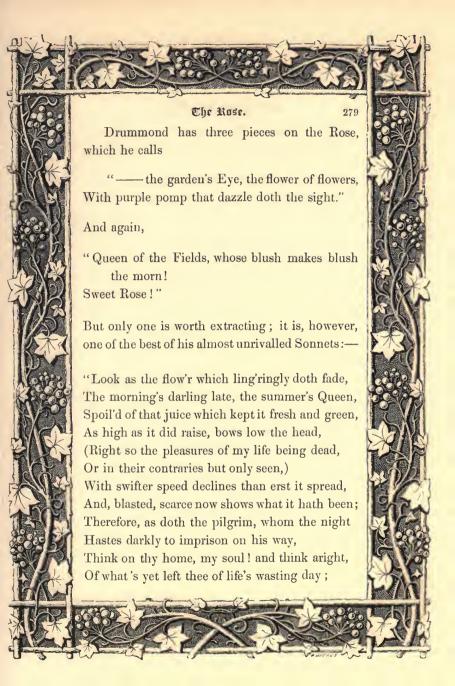


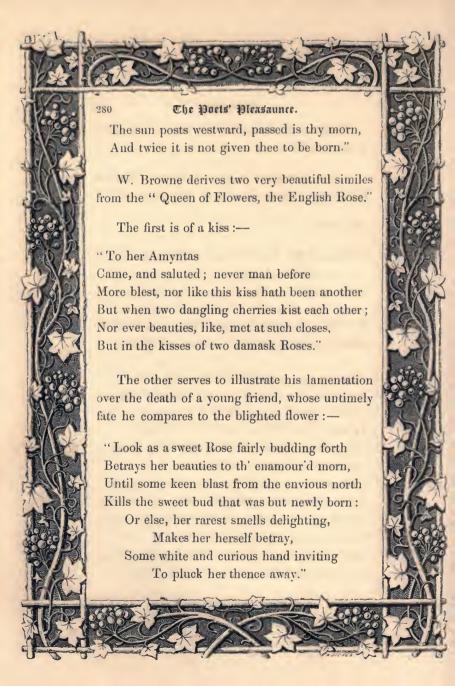














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W. BROWNE.

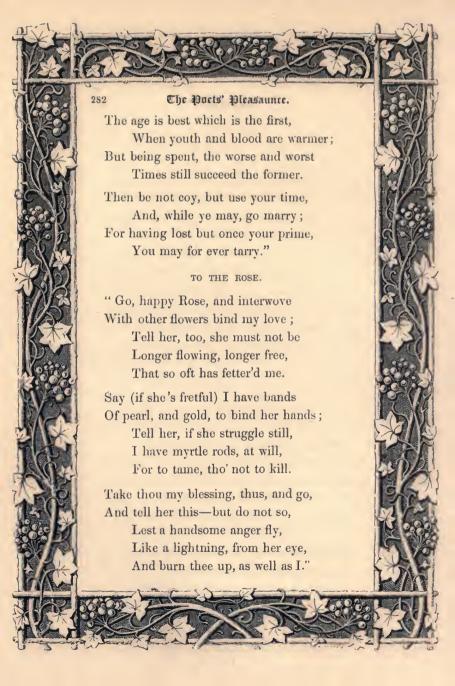
"A Rose, as fair as ever saw the north,
Grew in a little garden all alone;
A sweeter flower did Nature ne'er put forth,
Nor fairer garden yet was never known:
And maidens danced about it more and more,
And learned bards of it their ditties made;
The nimble fairies, by the pale-faced moon,
Water'd the roots, and kiss'd her pretty shade.
But, well-a-day! the gard'ner careless grew;
The maids and fairies both were kept away;
And in a drought the caterpillars threw
Themselves upon the bud and every spray:
God shield the stock! if heaven send me supplies,
The fairest blossom of the garden dies."

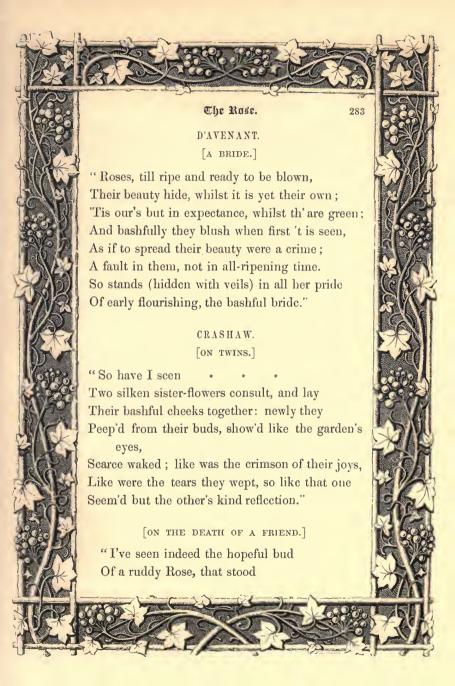
HERRICK.

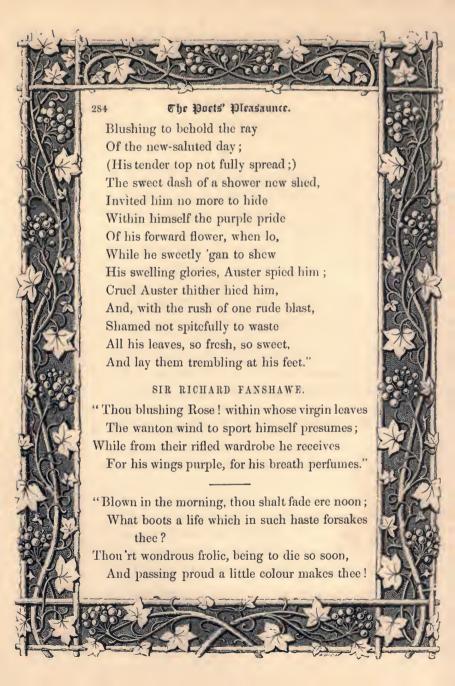
TO THE VIRGINS TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME.

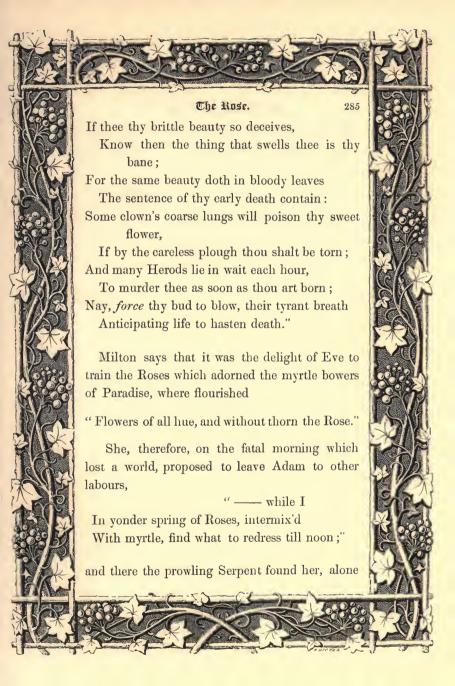
"Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,
Old time is still a flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

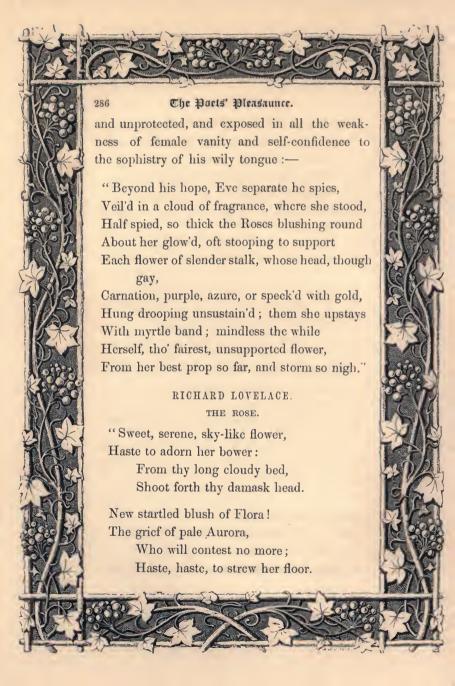
The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

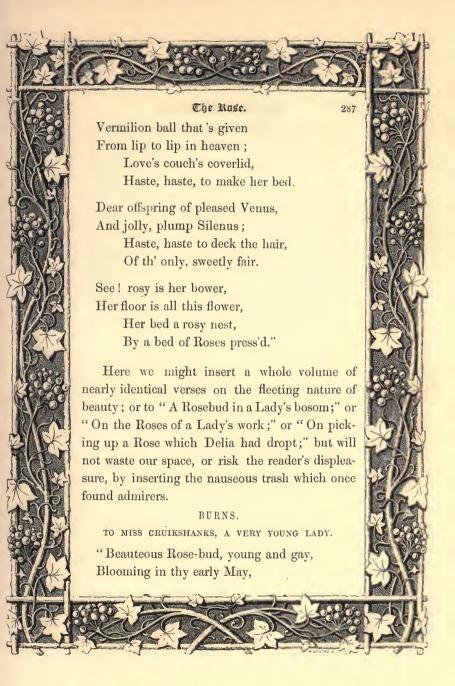


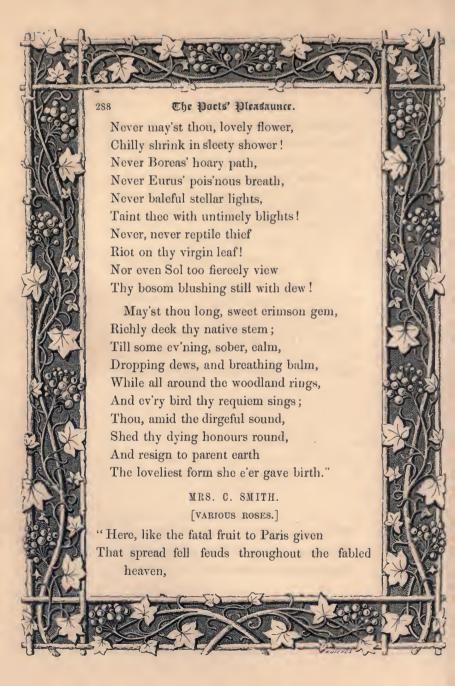














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The yellow Rose her golden globe displays;
There lovelier still, among the spiny sprays
Her blushing rivals glow with brighter dyes,
Than paints the summer sun or western skies;
And the scarce tinged, and paler Rose unveil
Their modest beauties to the sighing gale."

"--- There Roses blow

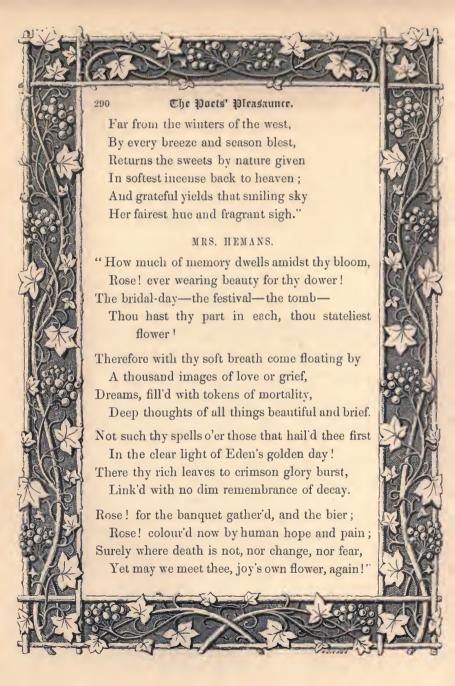
Almost uncultured: some with dark green leaves Contrast their flowers of pure unsullied white; Others, like velvet robes of royal state Of richest crimson; while, in thorny moss Enshrined and cradled, the most lovely wear The lines of youthful beauty's glowing cheek."

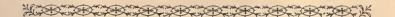
BYRON.

[THE ROSE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.]

"For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale, Sultana of the Nightingale,

The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale:
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,







The White Rose.

ROSA ALBA.

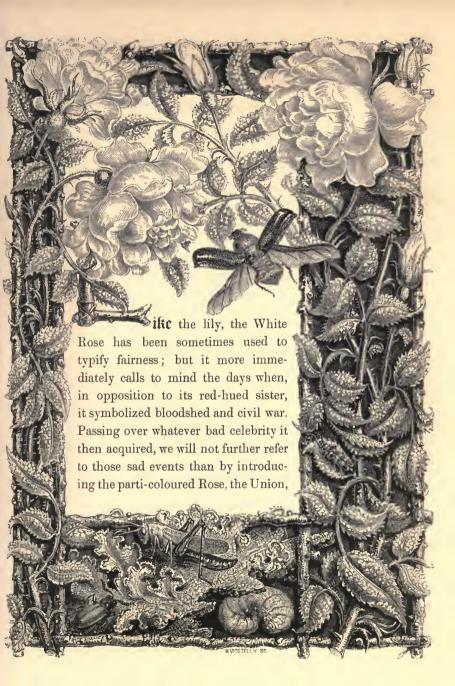


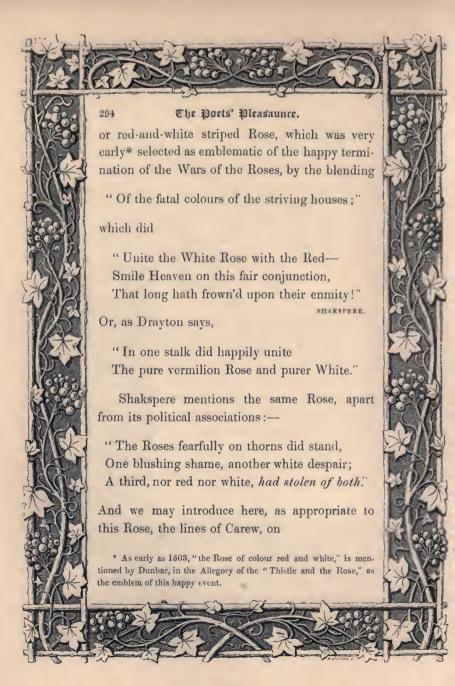


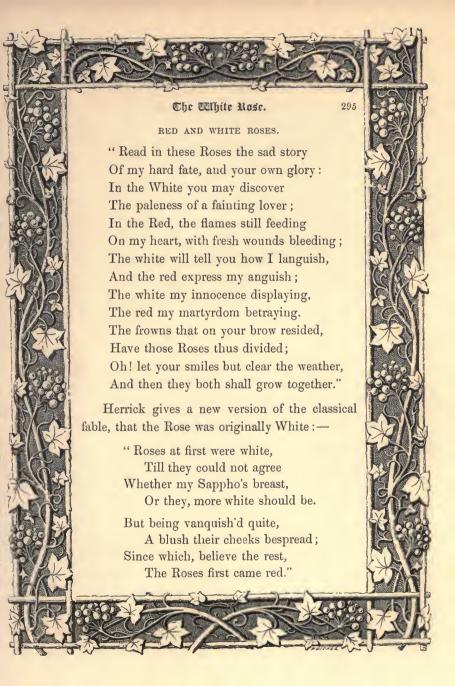
" Not but, perchance, to deck some virgin's tomb,—— Some Rose of maiden-blush may faintly bloom, Or, withering, hang its emblematic head."

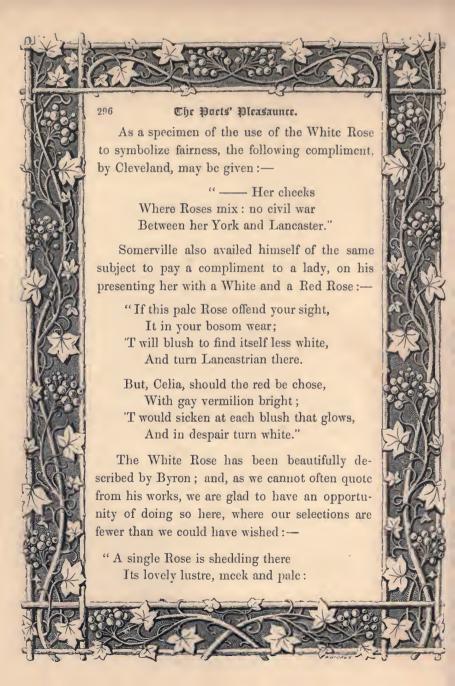
MASON.

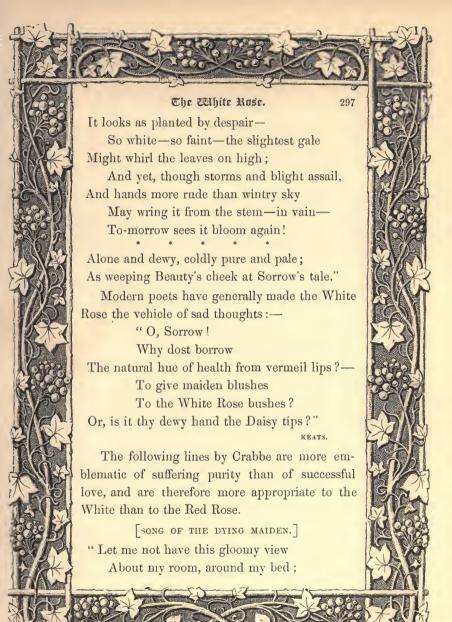


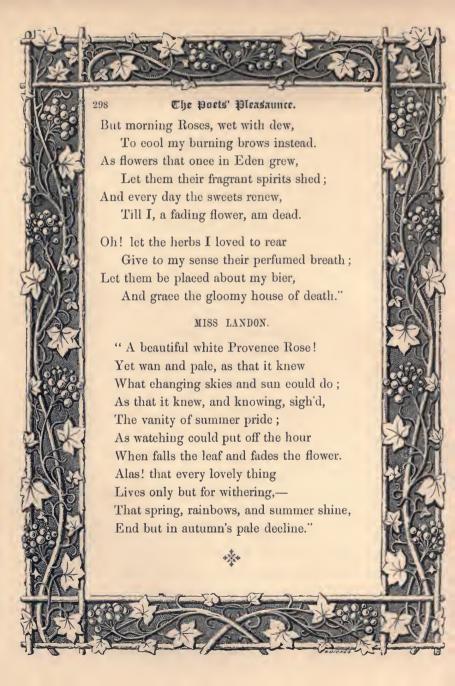
















The Wild Rose.

ROSA CANINA.

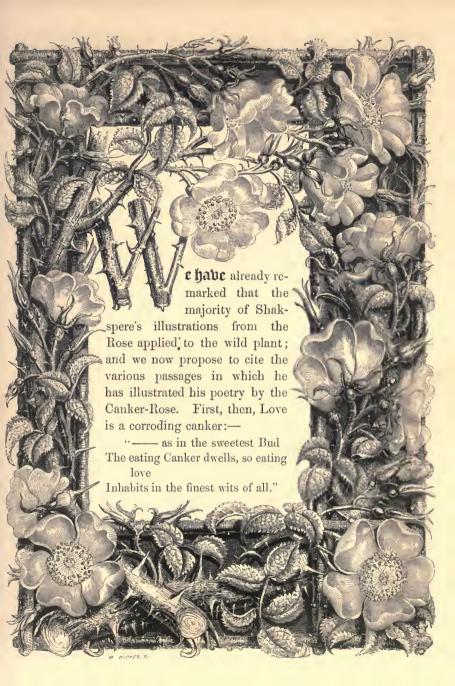


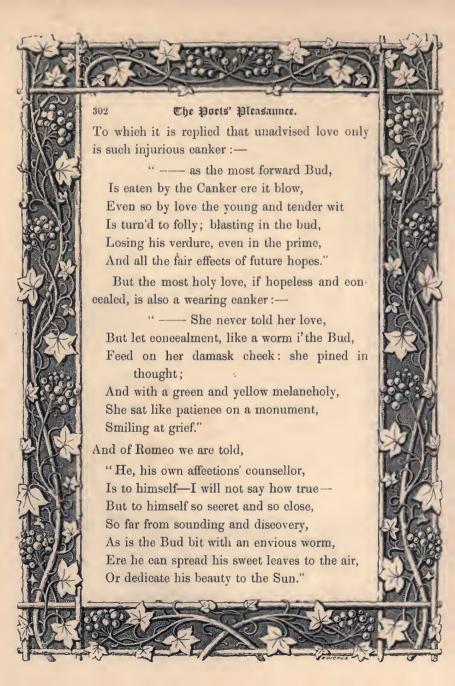


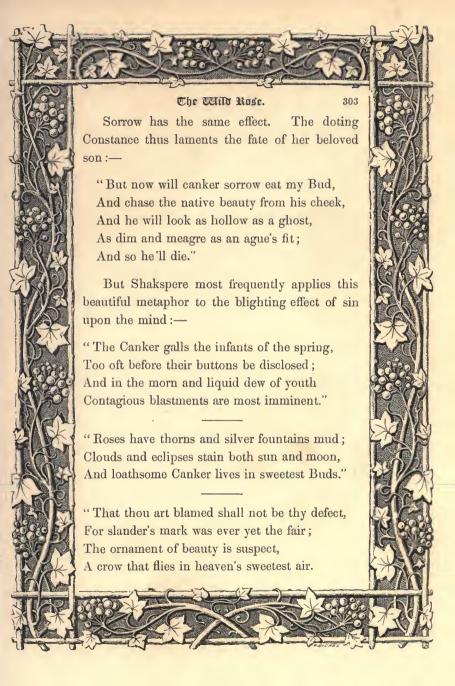
" Sweet is the Rose, but grows upon a Breere."

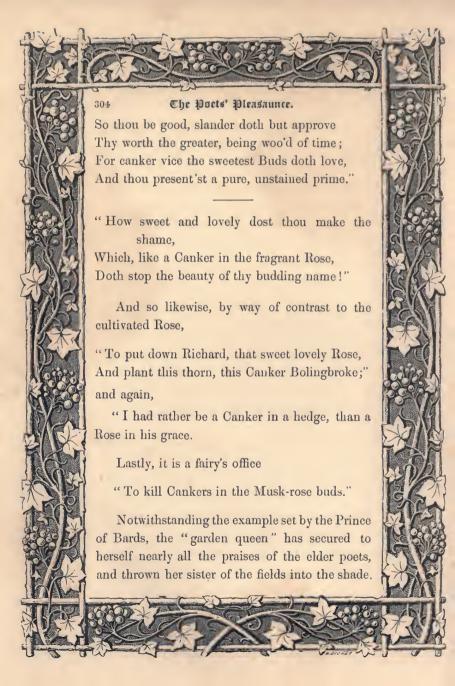
SPENSER.













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Modern poets have, however, done something to rescue the most lovely of the country's summer decorations from obscurity, and to place it in a more just position. Hamilton has a pretty ballad on the Wild Rose, entitled

THE FLOWER OF YARROW.

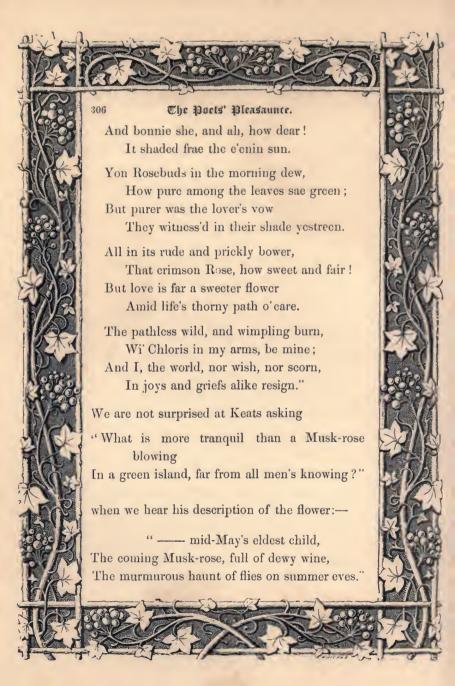
"Go, lovely Rose! what dost thou here, Lingering away thy short-lived year? Vainly shining, idly blooming, Thy unenjoyed sweets consuming.

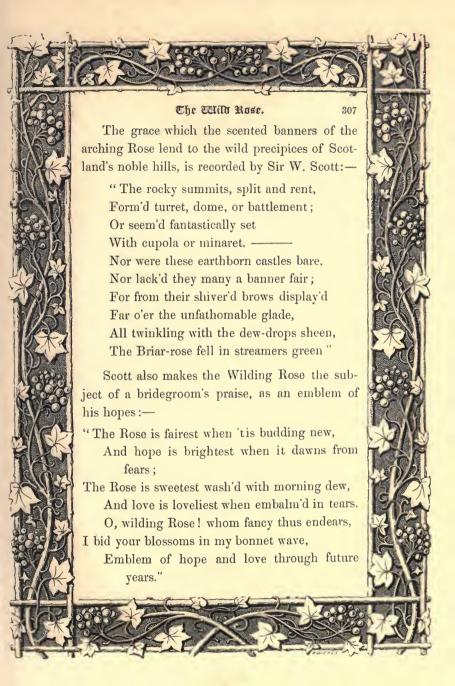
Vain is thy radiant garlies hue, No hand to pull, no eye to view; What are thy charms no heart desiring? What profits beauty none admiring?

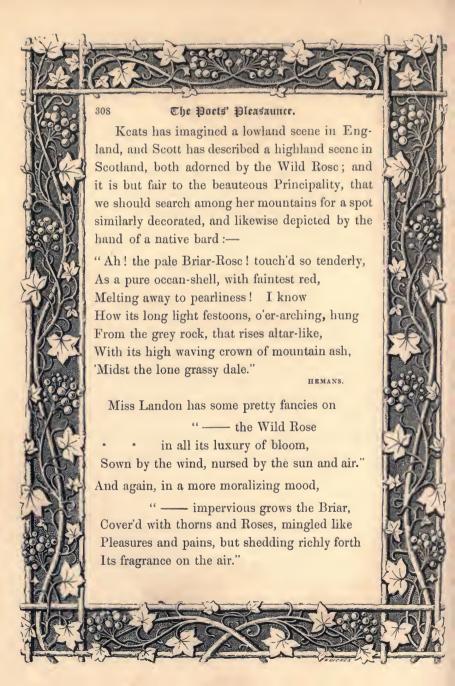
Go, Yarrow flower to Yarrow maid, And on her panting bosom laid, There all thy native form confessing The charm of beauty is possessing."

Burns has several very beautiful songs to the Wild Rose; one of which we cannot resist the temptation of giving:—

"O bonnie was yon rosy Briar That blooms sae far frae haunt o'man;











The Eglantine.

ROSA RUBIGINOS A.



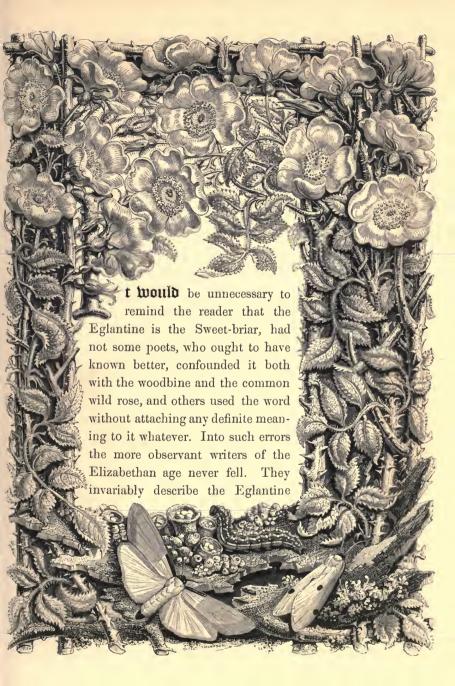


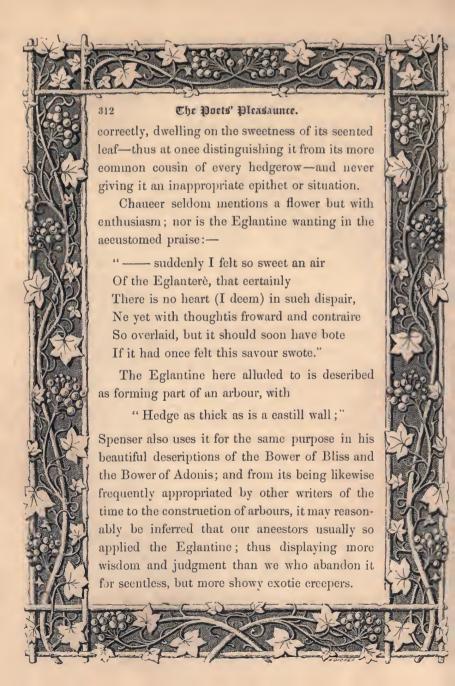
"Sweet is the Eglantine, but pricketh near."

"—grateful Eglantine regales the smell
Of those that walk at evening."

COWPER.









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Listen to the description of the arbour in the garden of Adonis:—

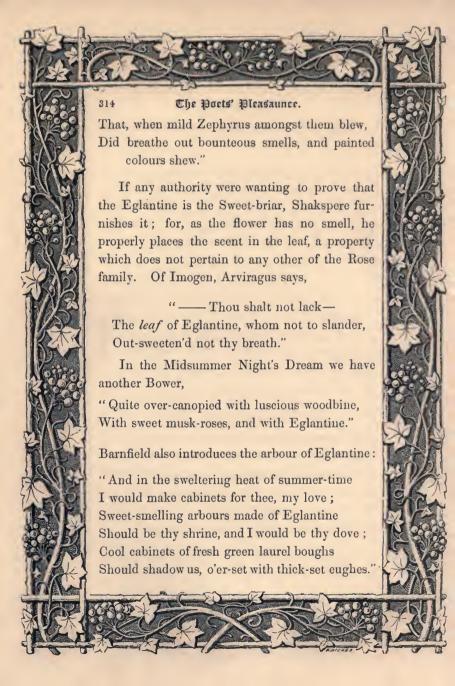
"And in the thickest covert of that shade
There was a pleasant arbour, not by art,
But of the trees' own inclination made,
Which knitting their rank branches part to part,
With wanton ivie-twine entrayl'd athwart,
And Eglantine and caprifole* among,
Fashion'd above within their inmost part,
That neither Phœbus' beams could through them
throng,

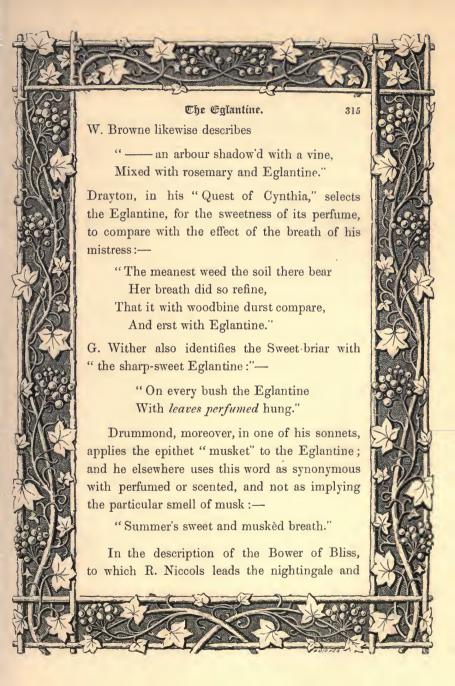
Nor Æolus' sharp blast could work them any wrong."

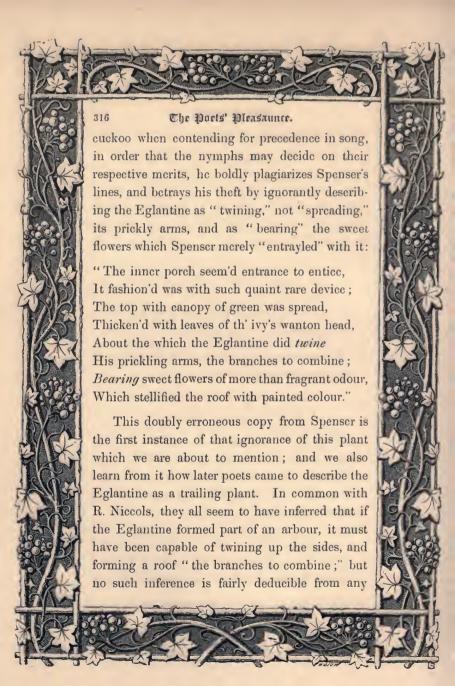
Secondly, the Bower of Bliss:-

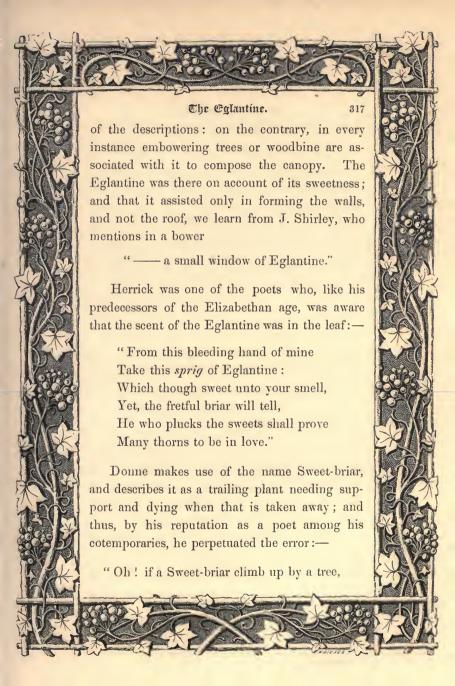
"——Art, striving to compare
With Nature, did an arbour green dispread,
Framed of wanton ivie, flowring faire,
Through which the fragrant Eglantine did spread
His pricking arms, entrayl'd with roses red,
Which dainty odours round about them threw;
And all within with flowers was garnished,

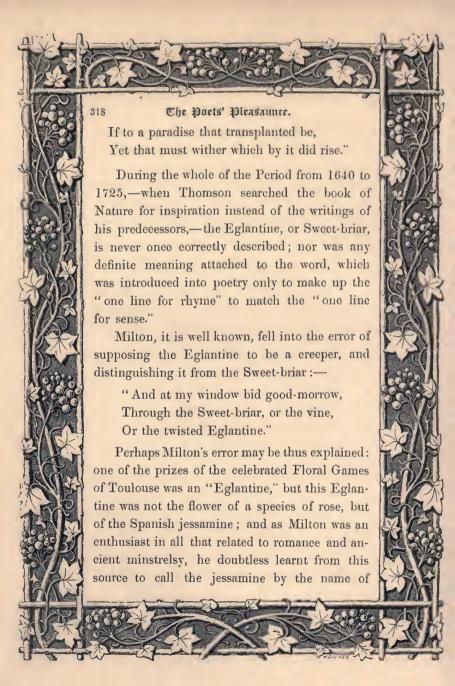
* Caprifolium: the name of the Woodbine, until Linnæus classed it under the genus Lonicera.

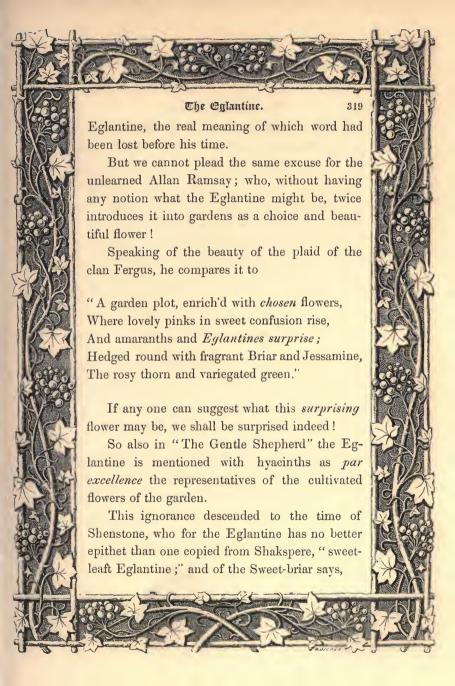


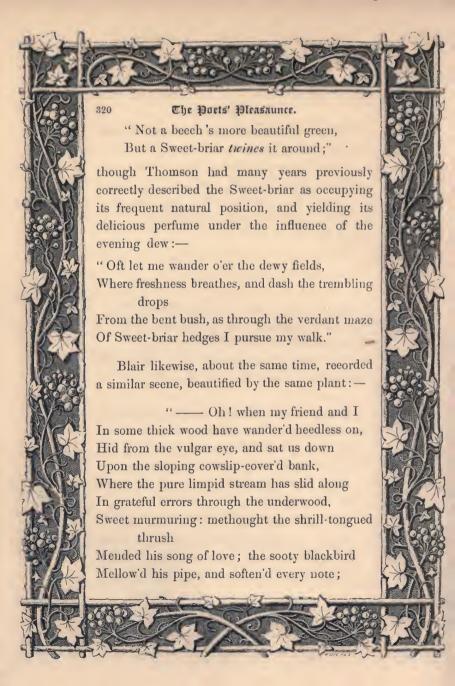


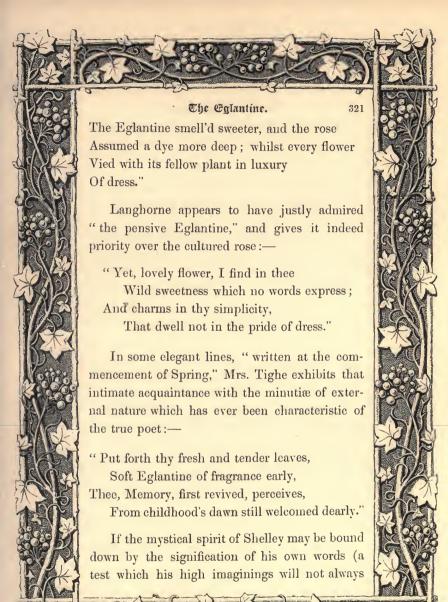


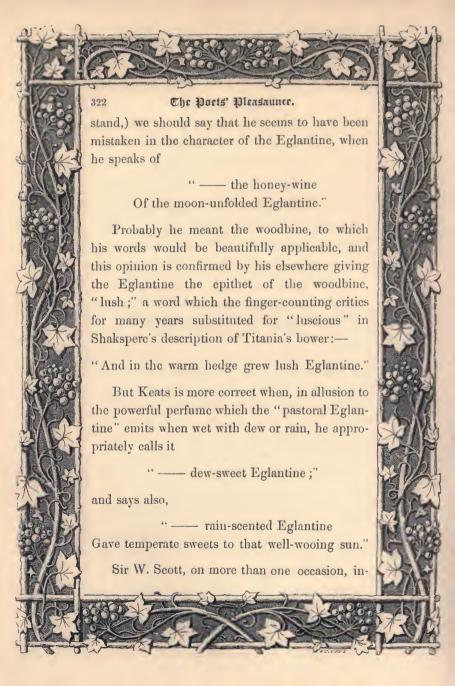


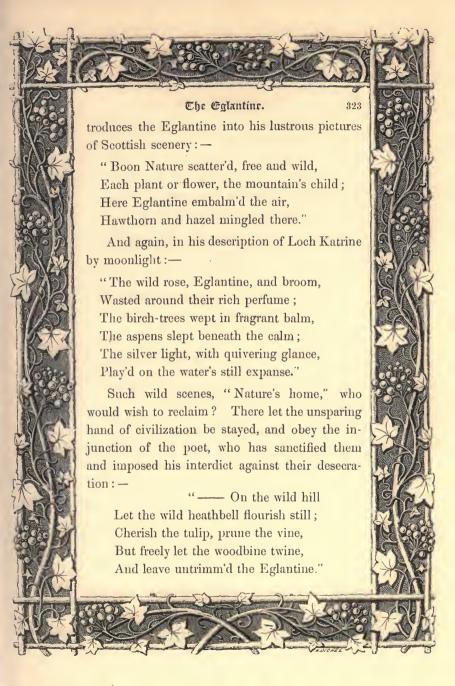


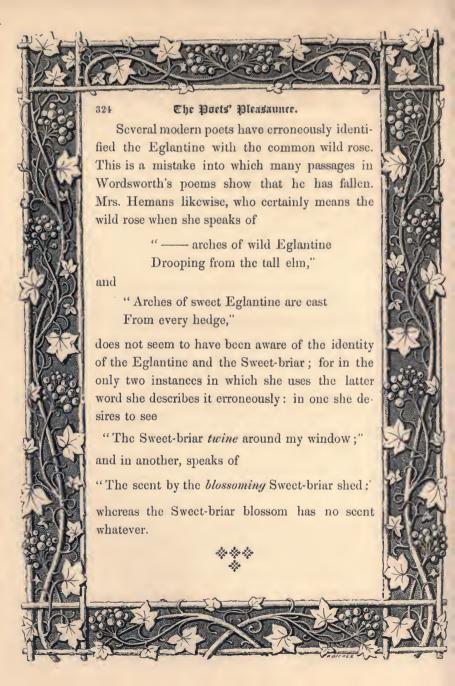
















The Moodbine.

LONICERA PERICLYMENUM.





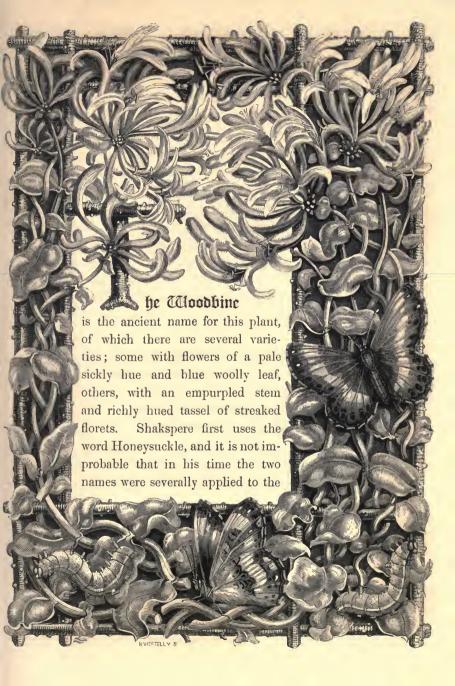
"The Woodbine, who her Elm in marriage meets,
And brings her dowry in surrounding sweets."

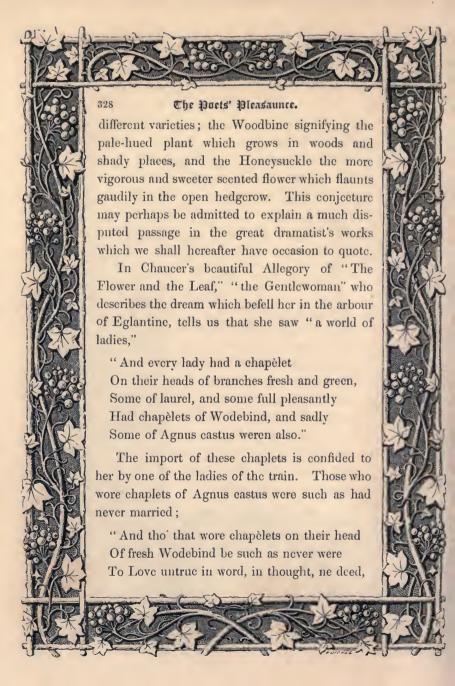
CHURCHILL.

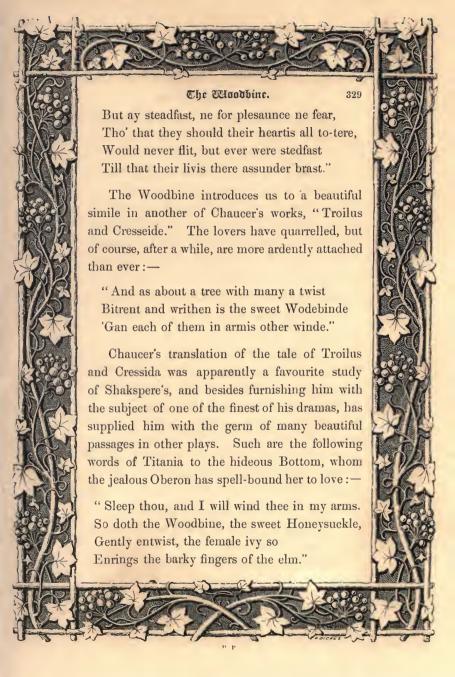
" ———— the Woodbine fair,
With tassels that perfume the summer air."

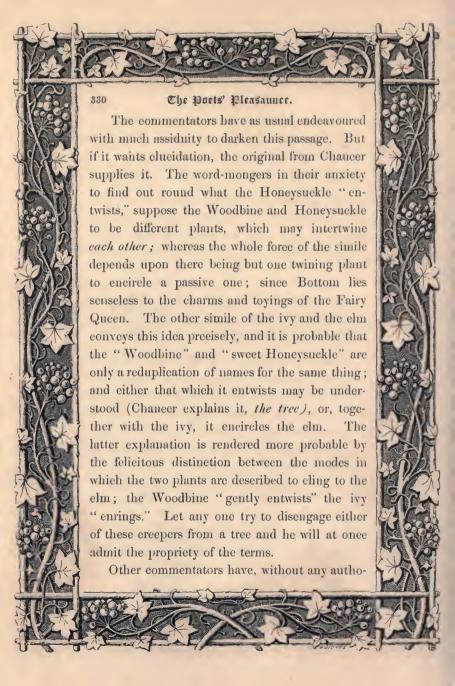
MRS. C. SMITH.

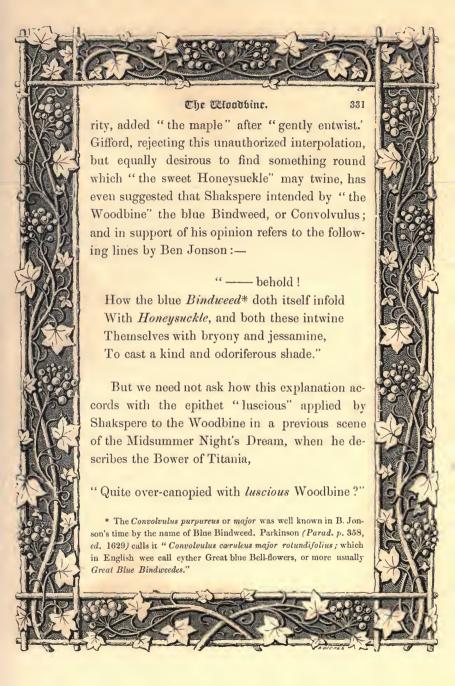


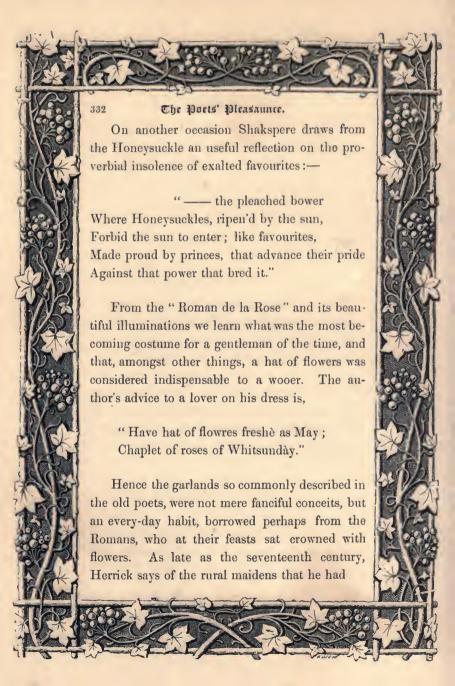














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"—— seen them in a round,*
Each virgin, like a Spring,
With Honeysuckles crown'd."

As Milton has used both the popular names of the Honeysuckle with propriety, it cannot be doubted that although he might be in error in applying the epithet "twisted" to the Eglantine, he could not, as has been asserted, have meant the Woodbine. In Lycidas he appropriately describes it as

" --- the well-attired Woodbine;"

and introduces it into Paradise with equal accuracy, when Eve, self-confident, proposes that while she

"In yonder spring of roses intermix'd 'With myrtle, finds what to redress till noon,"

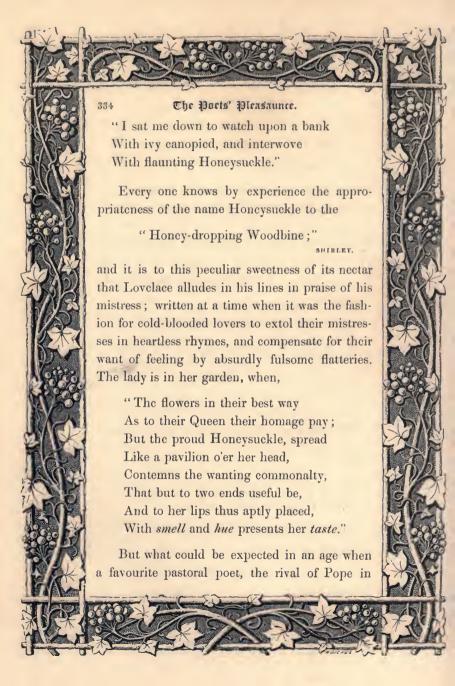
Adam shall

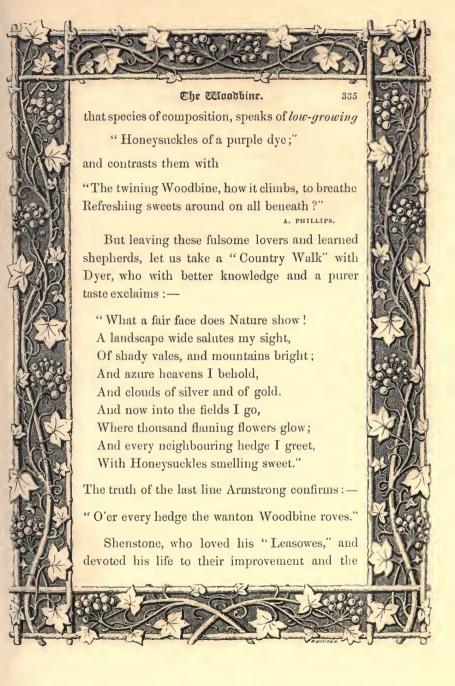
" --- wind

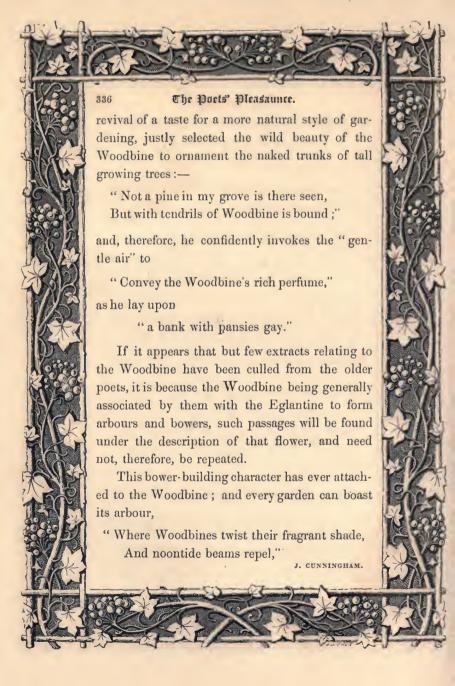
The Woodbine round this arbour, or direct The clasping ivy where to twine."

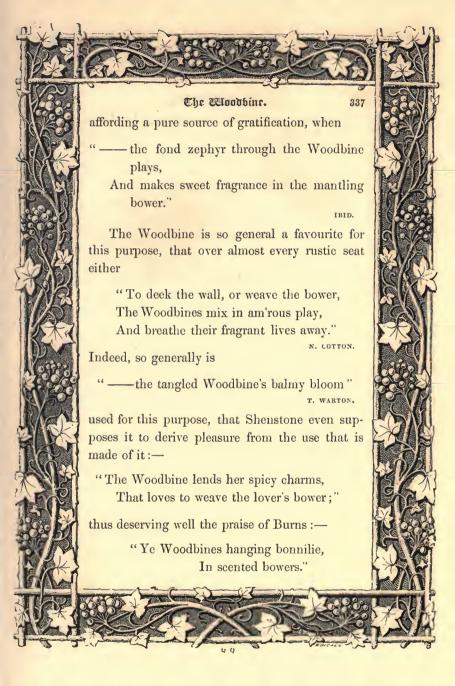
The Honeysuckle he mentions in a beautiful rustic picture:—

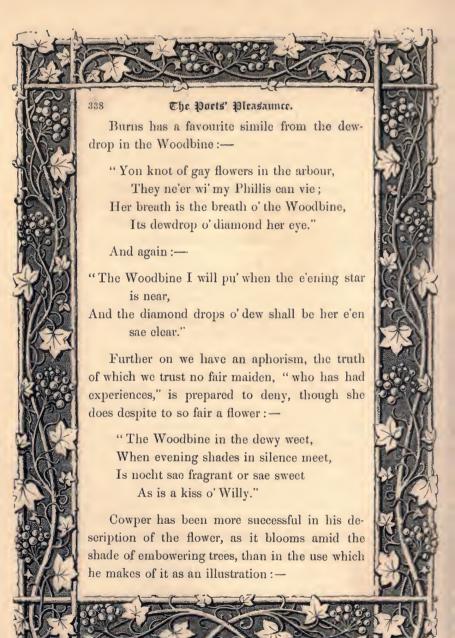
* A dance so called.

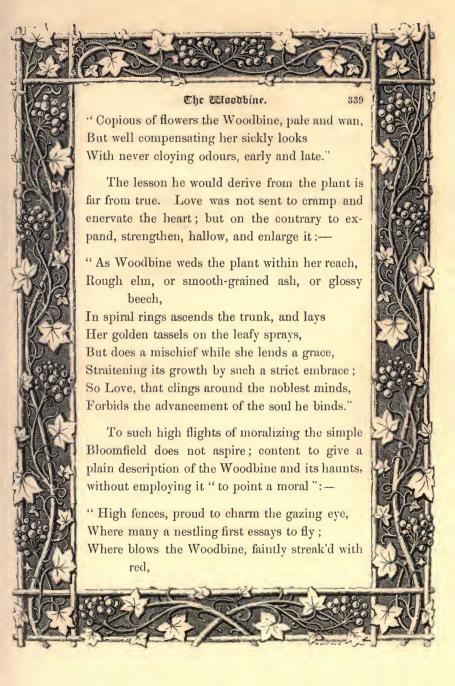


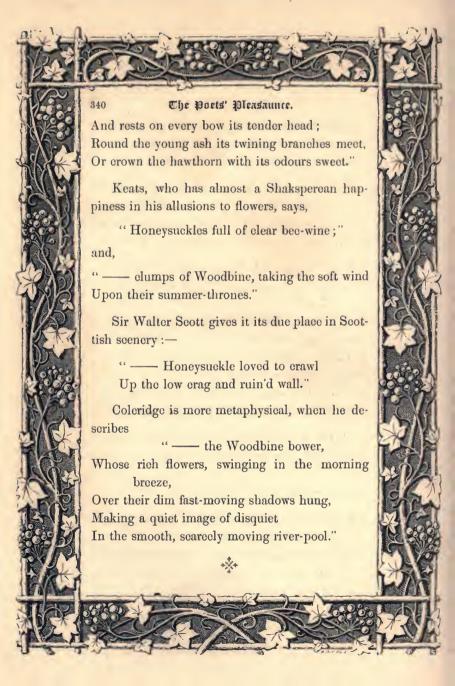
















The Jasmine.

JASMINUM OFFICINALE.

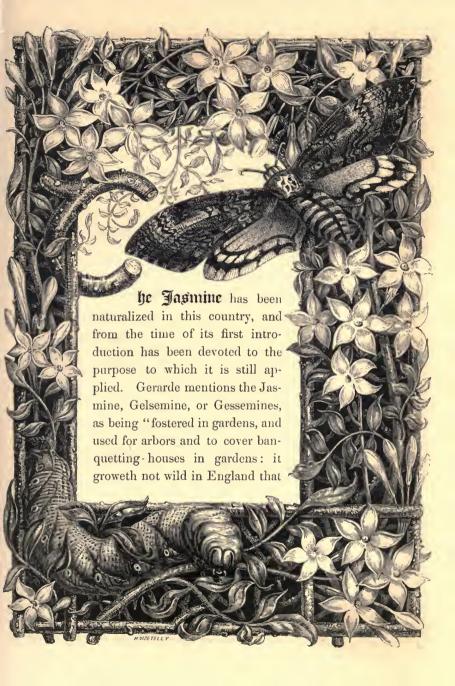


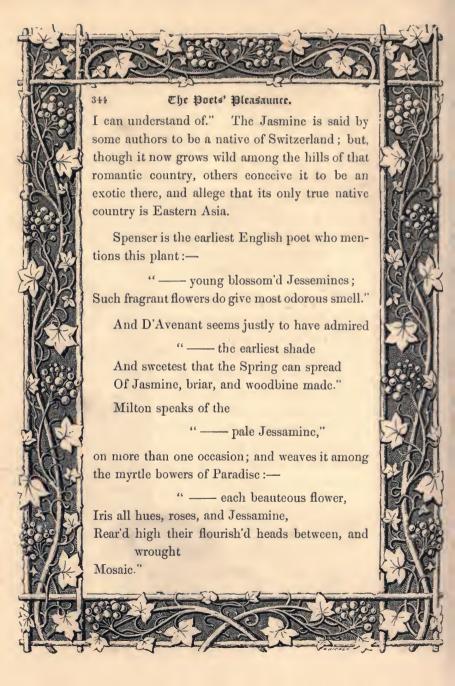


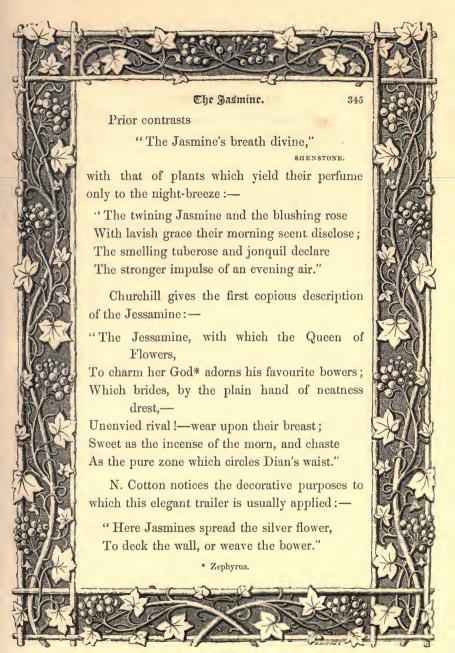
"Like a bridal canopy overhead,
The Jasmines their slender wreathings spread,
One with stars as ivory white,
The other with clusters of amber light."

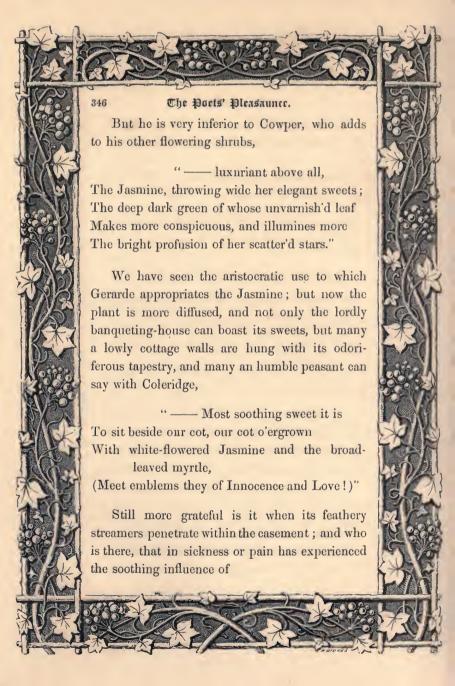
L. E. L.

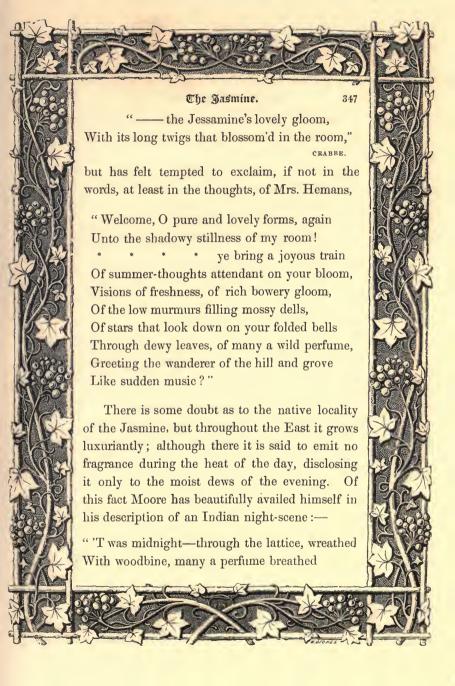


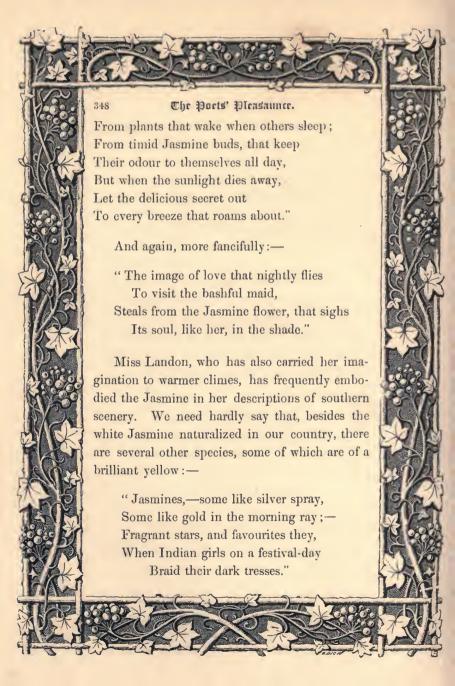


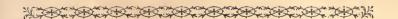














The Forglove.

DIGITALIS PURPUREA.

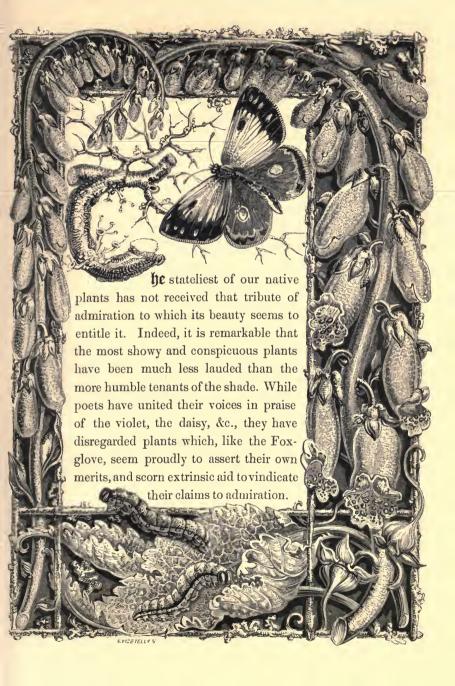


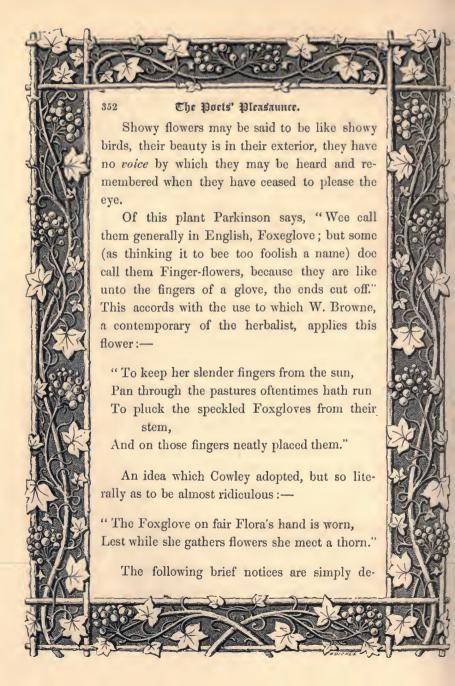


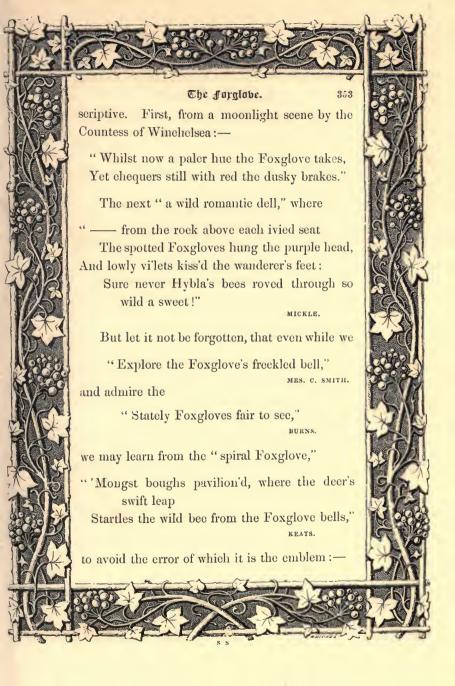
"To later Autumn's fragrant breath Clematis' feathery garlands dance; The hollow Foxglove nods beneath."

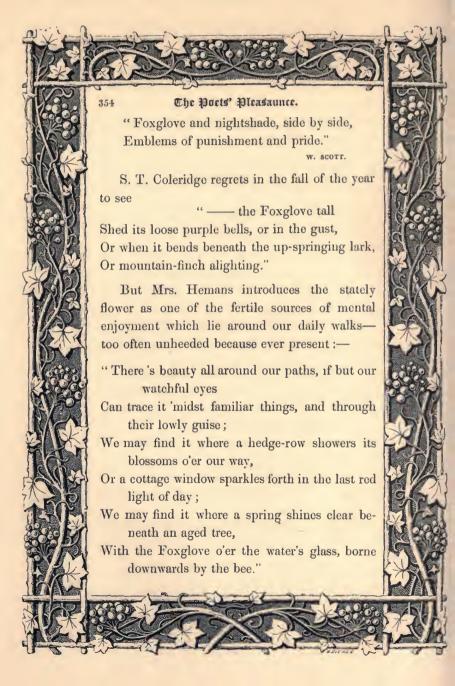
MRS C. SMITH.















The Marigold.

CALENDULA ARVENSIS.



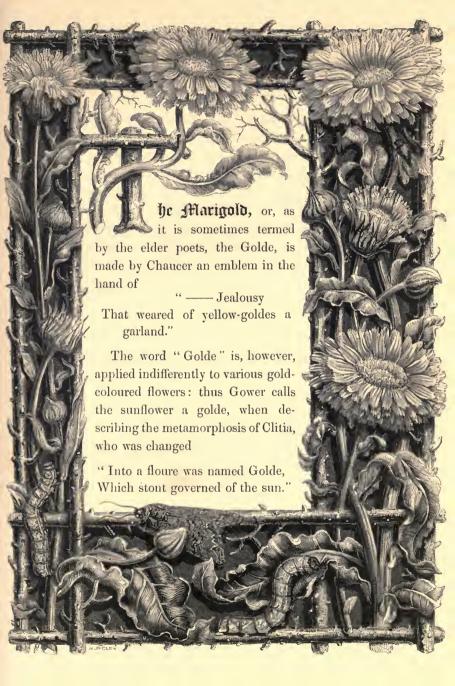


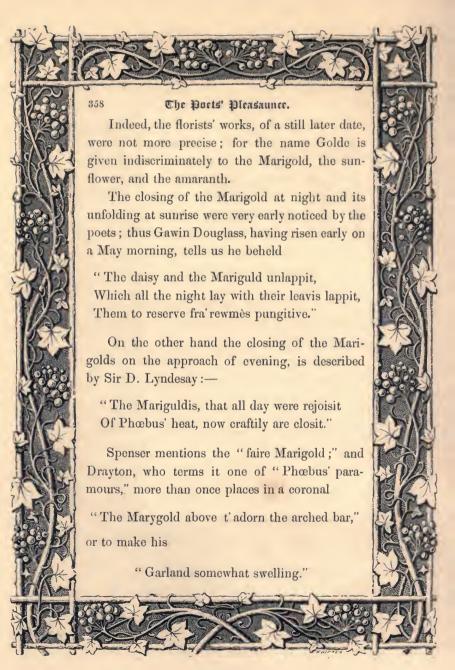
" ----- all of gold, The Marigold did her leaves unfold."

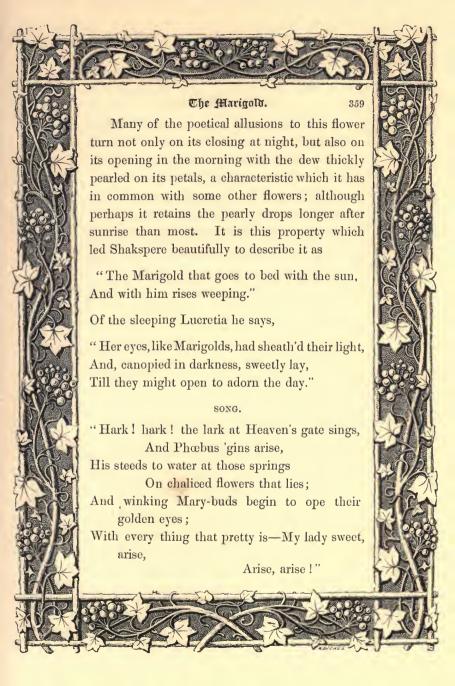
DRUMMOND.

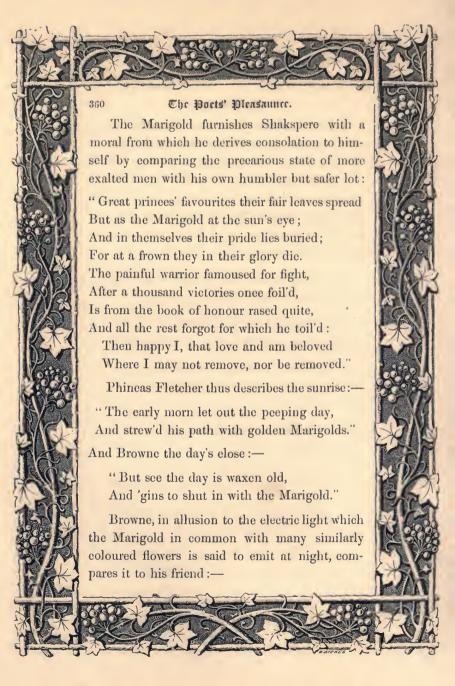
" The Mary-bud that shutteth with the light."

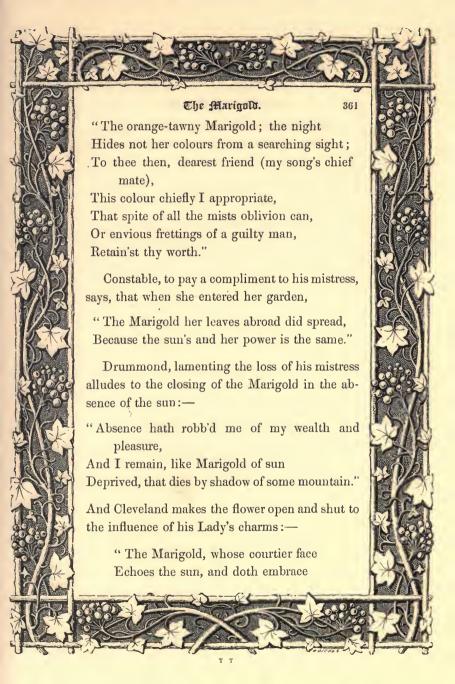


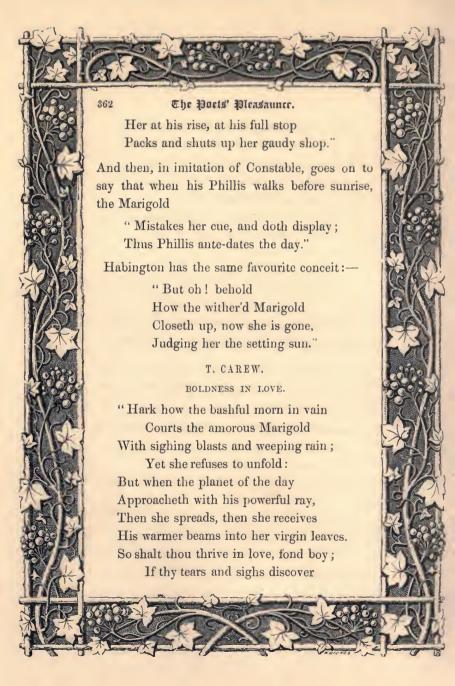


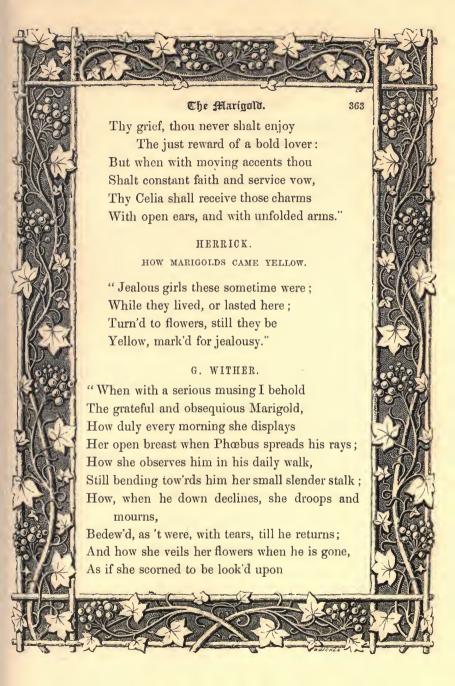


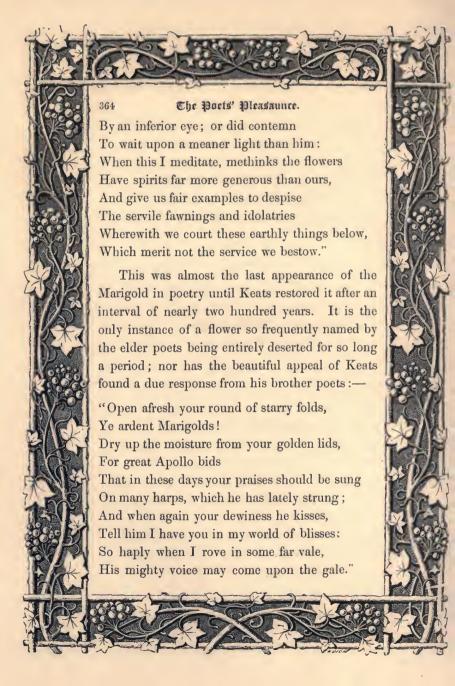


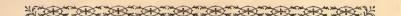














The Lily.

LILIUM CANDIDUM.

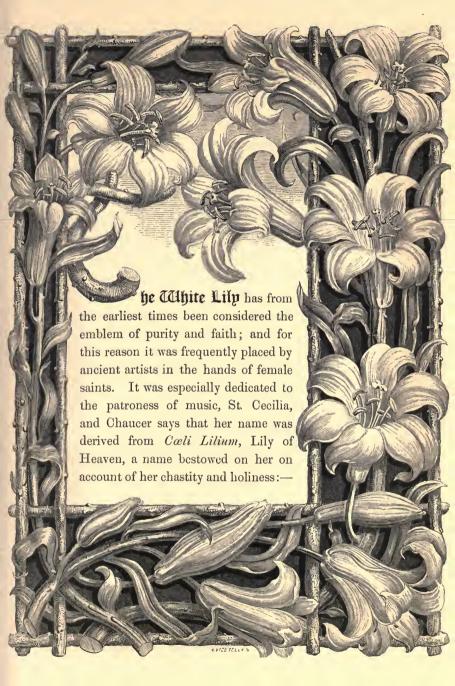


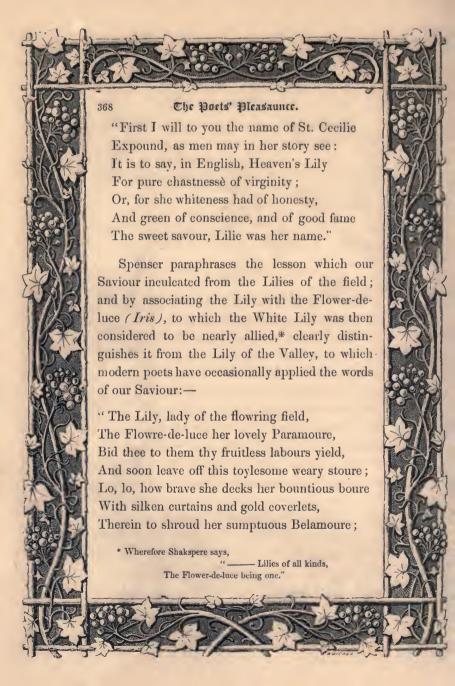


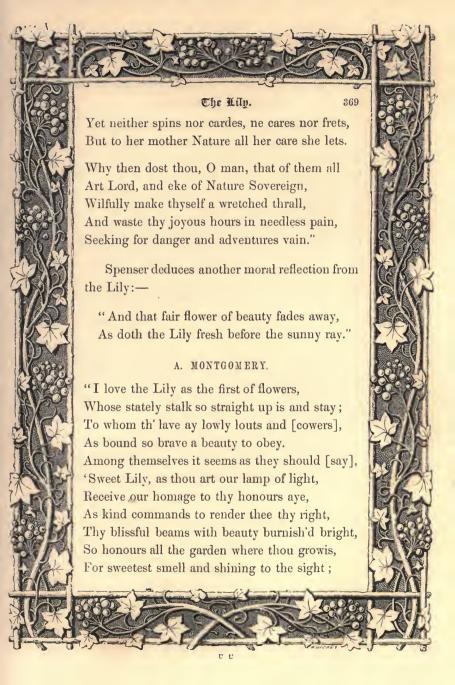
"Heavenly Lillyes with lokkerand toppis white
Openit and show their crestis redemyte,
The balmy vapour from their silken croppis
Distilling wholesome sugared honey-droppis."

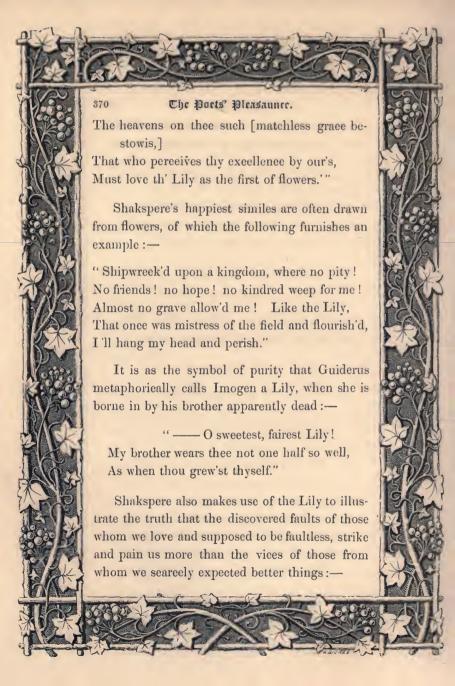
G. DOUGLASS.

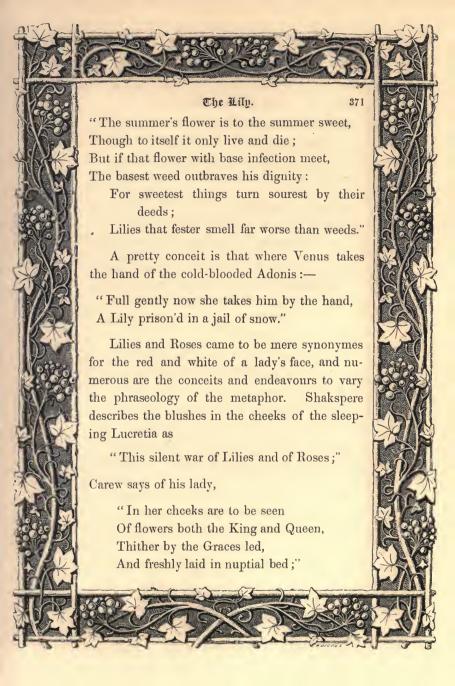


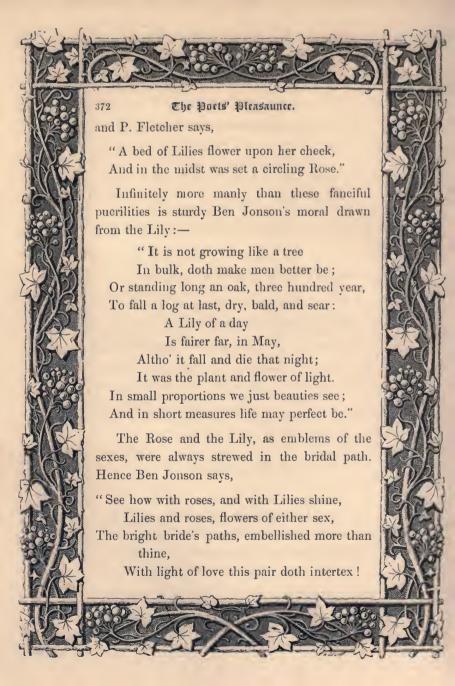


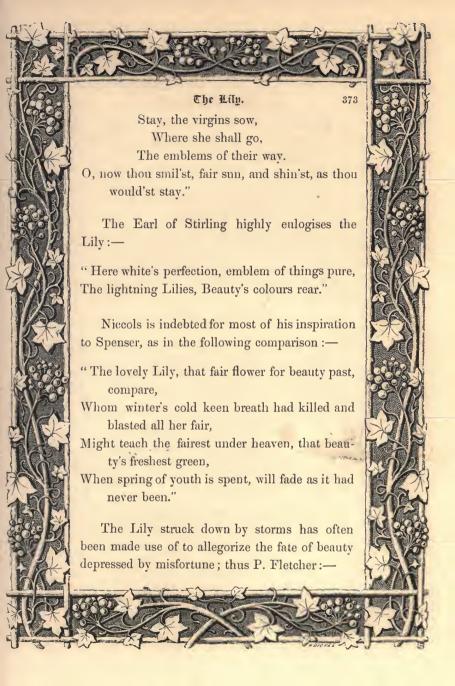


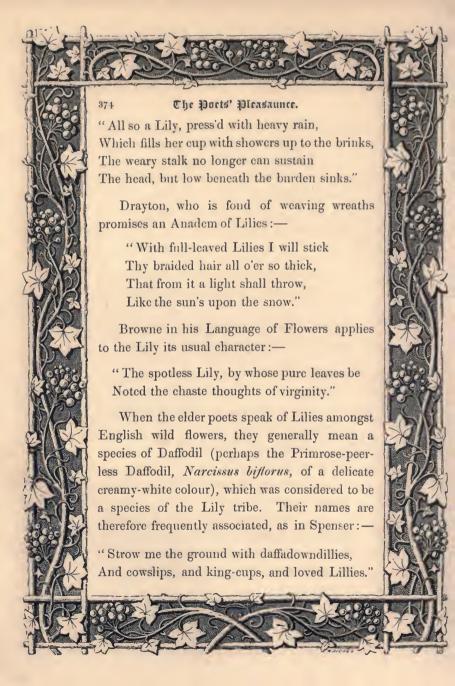


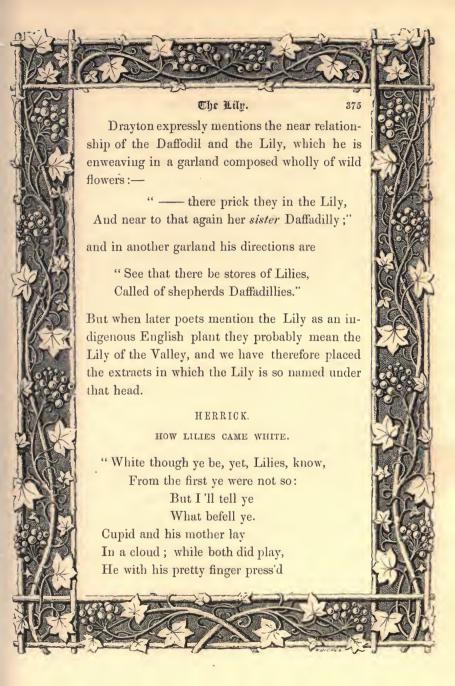


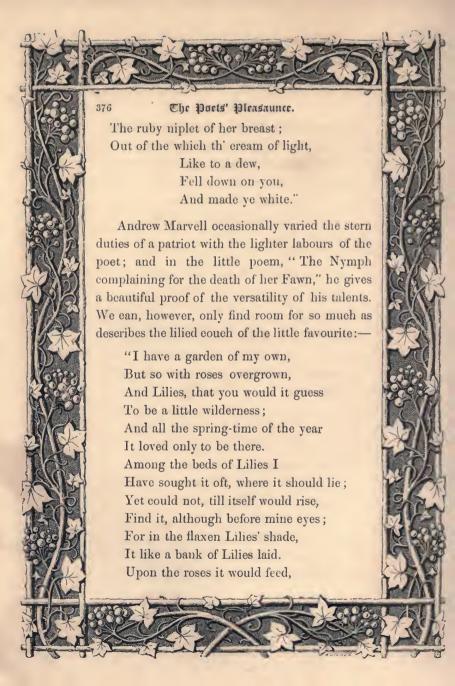


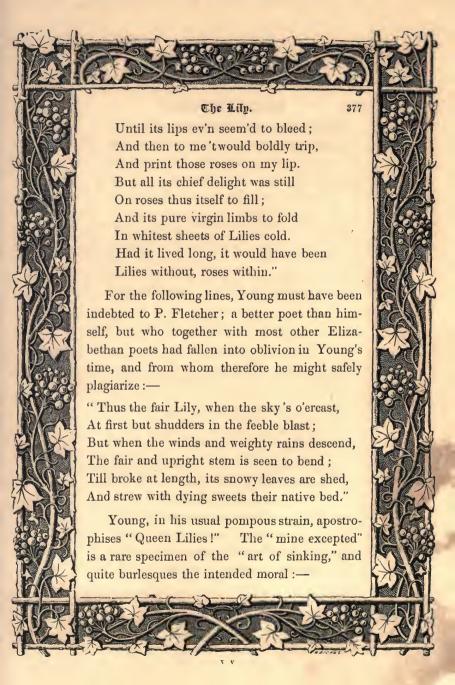


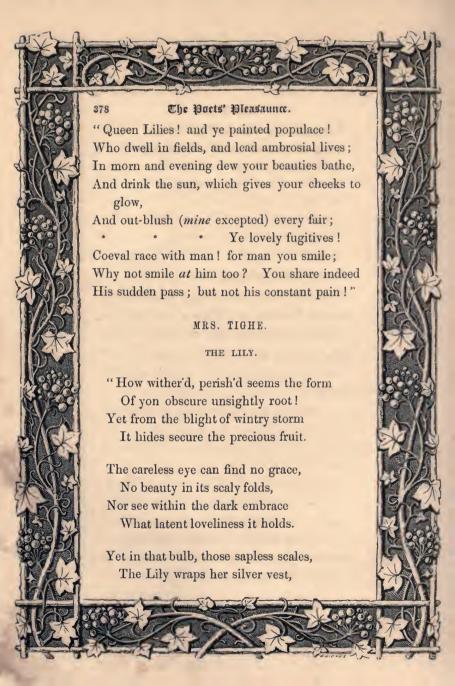


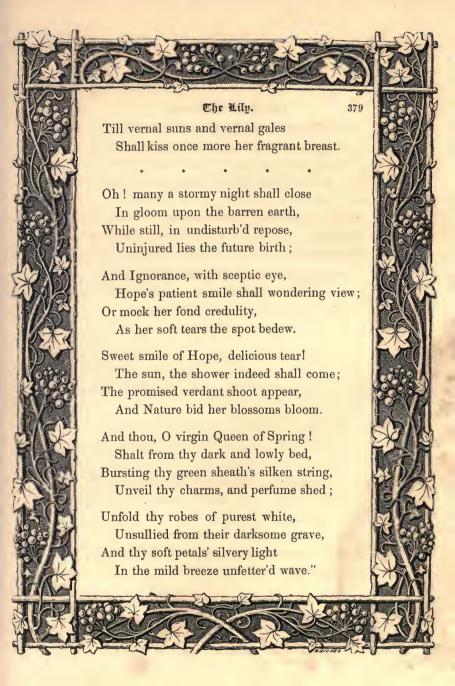


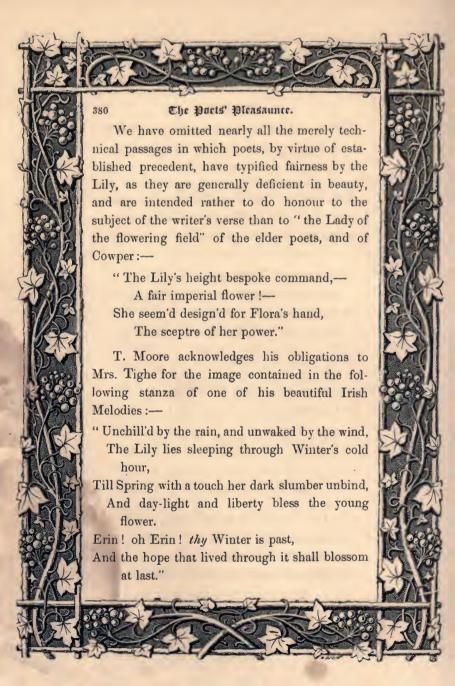


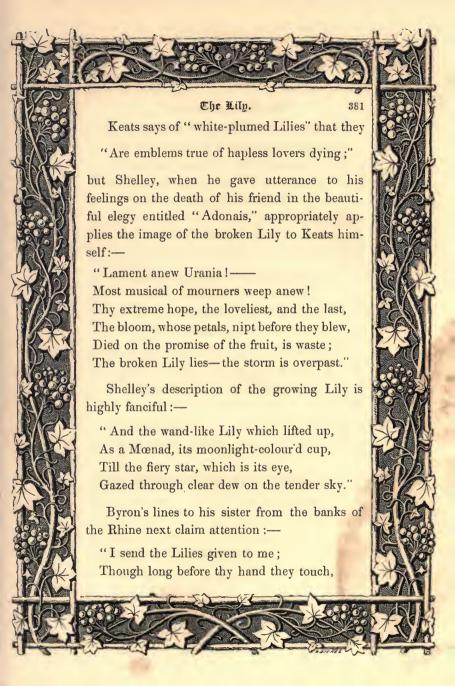


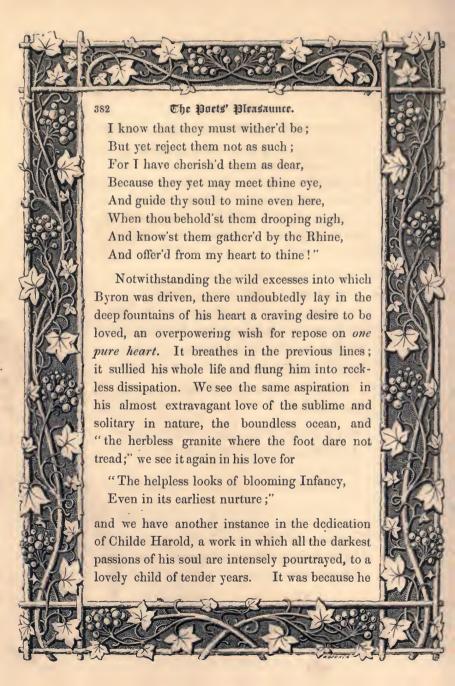


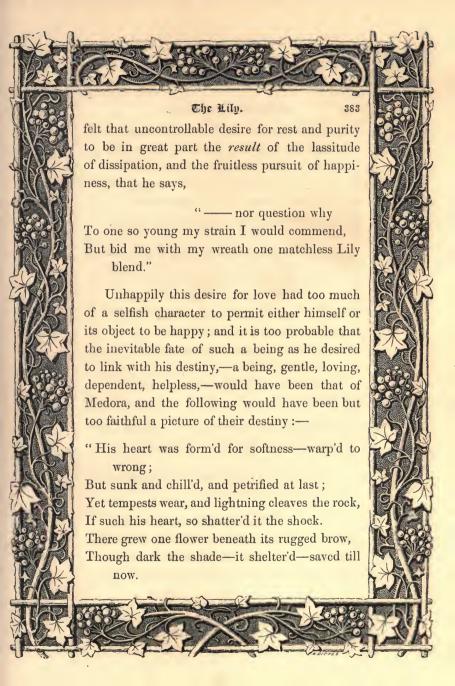


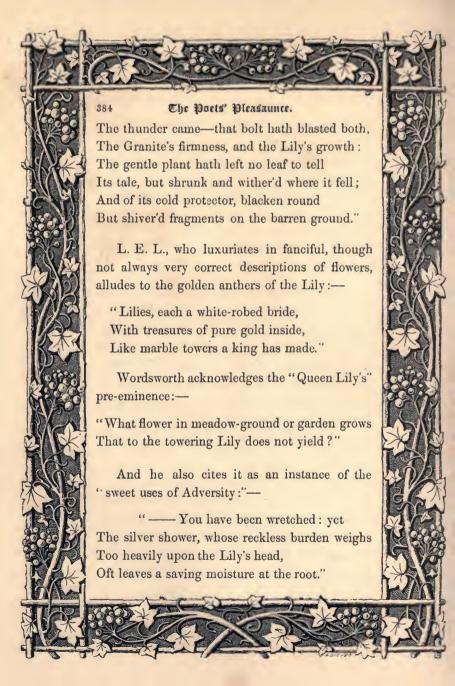
















The Carnation.

DIANTHUS CARYOPHYLLUS.

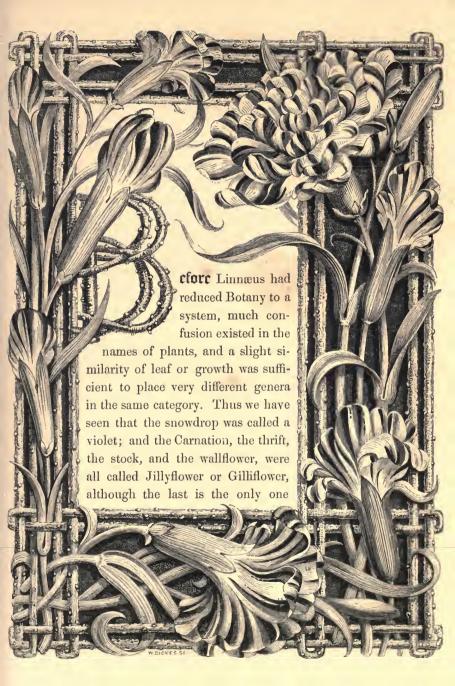


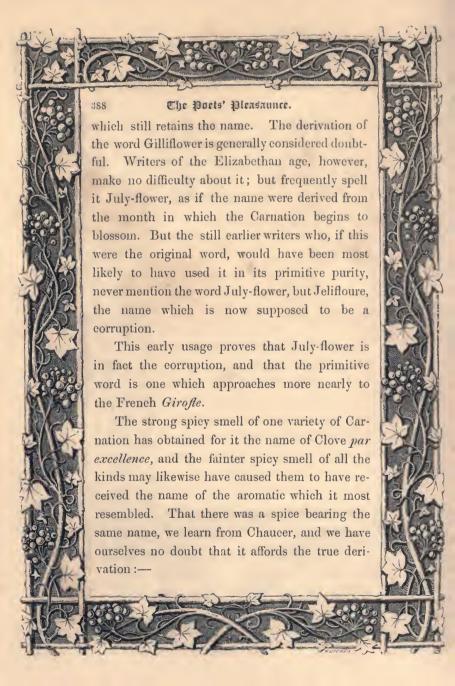


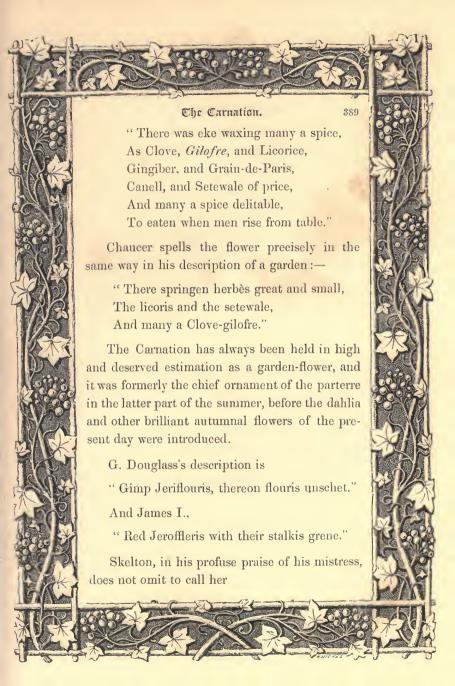


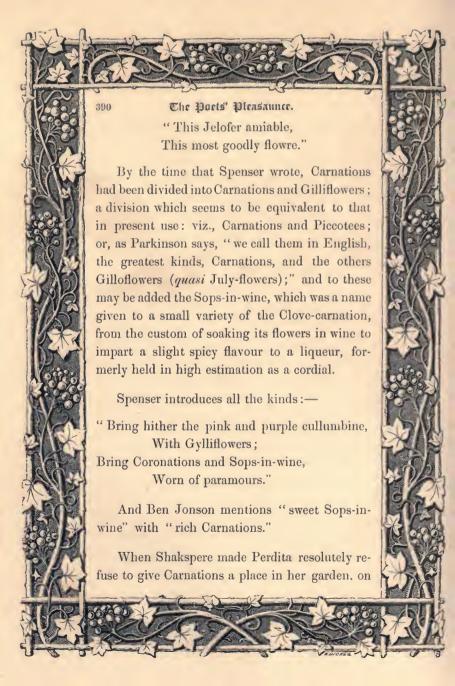
"——the fond Carnation loves to shoot
A various colour from one parent root."
FRIOR.

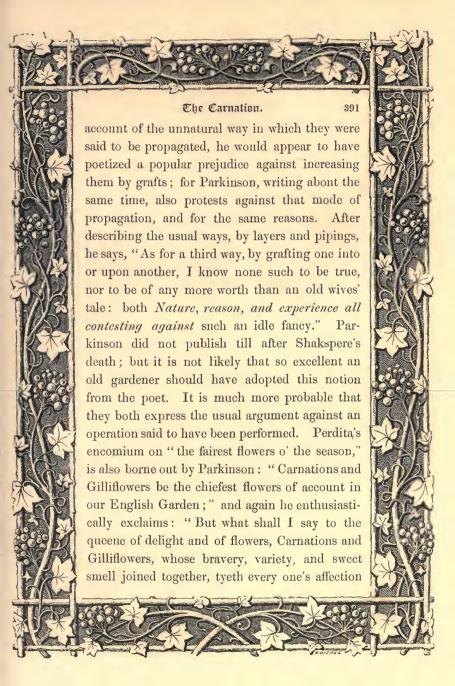


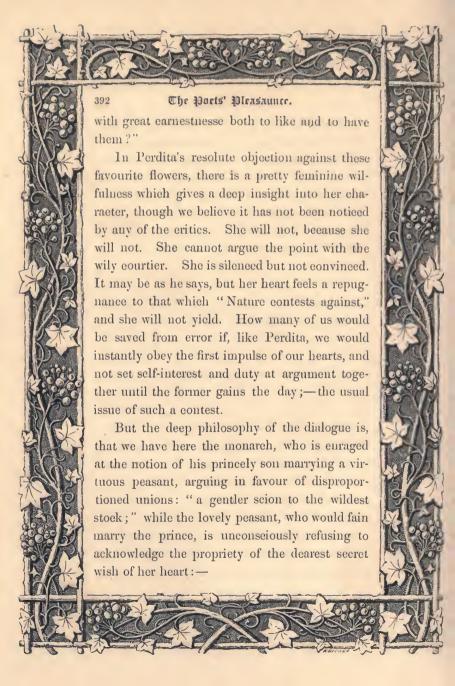














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"Perdita. Sir, the year growing ancient— Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth Of trembling winter—the fairest flowers o' the season

Are our Carnations and streak'd Gillyflowers, Which some call Nature's bastards: of that kind Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not To get slips of them.

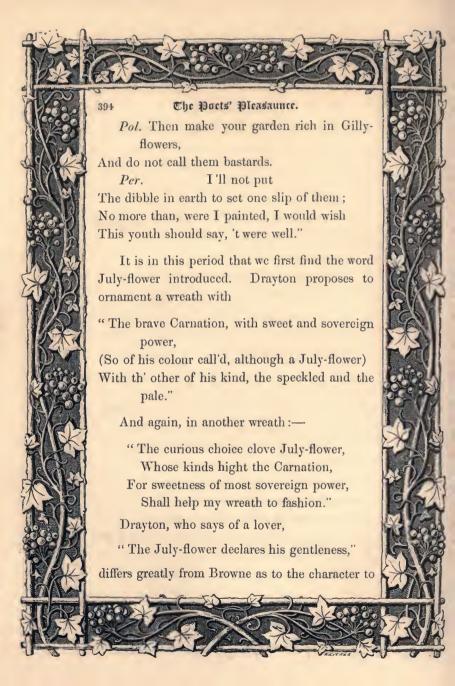
Polixenes. Wherefore, gentle maiden, Do you neglect them?

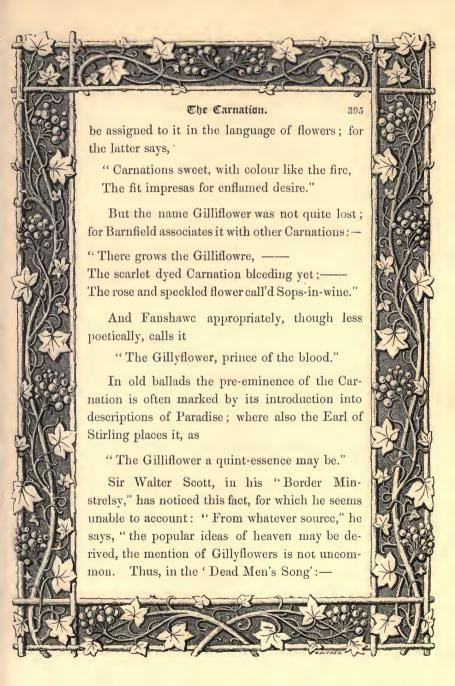
Per. For I have heard it said,
There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
With great creating Nature.

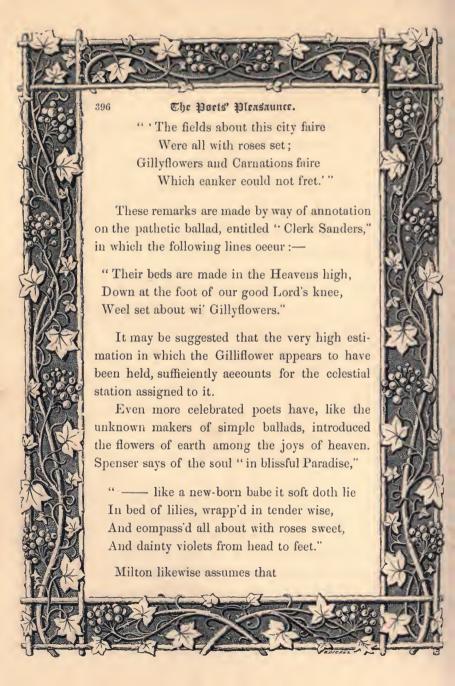
Pol. Say, there be;
Yet Nature is made better by no mean,
But Nature makes that mean: so, o'er that art,
Which, you say, adds to Nature, is an art
That Nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we
marry

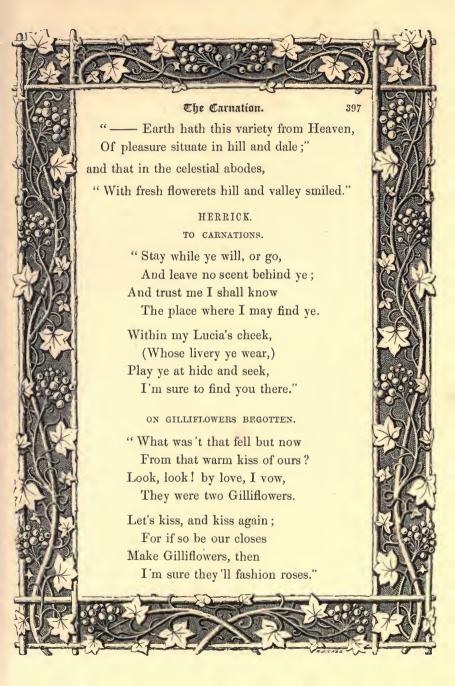
A gentler scion to the wildest stock;
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art
Which does mend Nature—change it rather; but
The art itself is Nature.

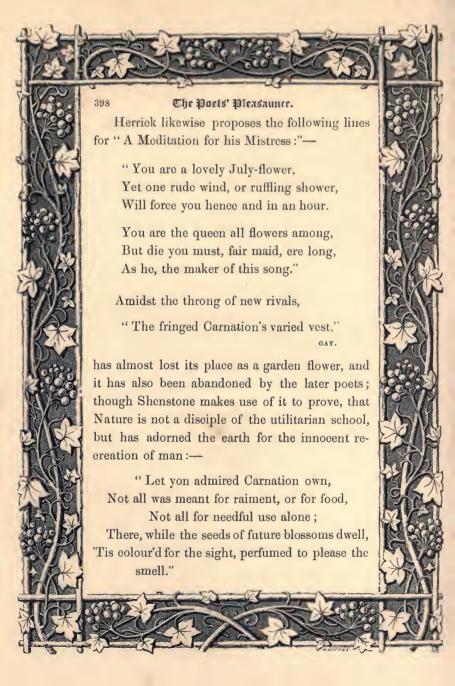
Per. So it is.

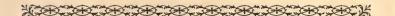














The Sunflower.

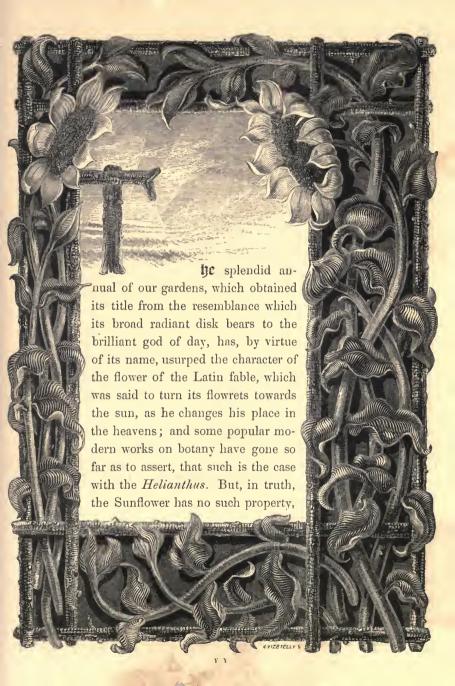
HELIANTHUS.

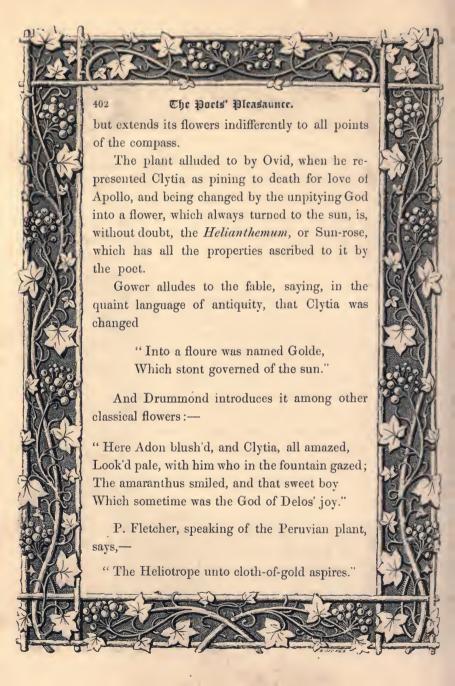


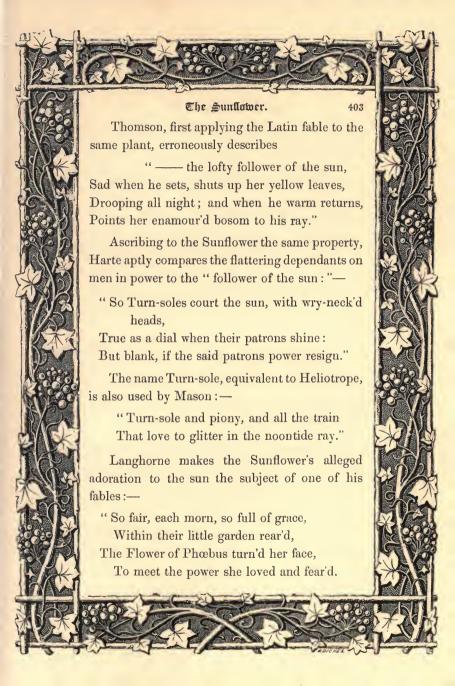


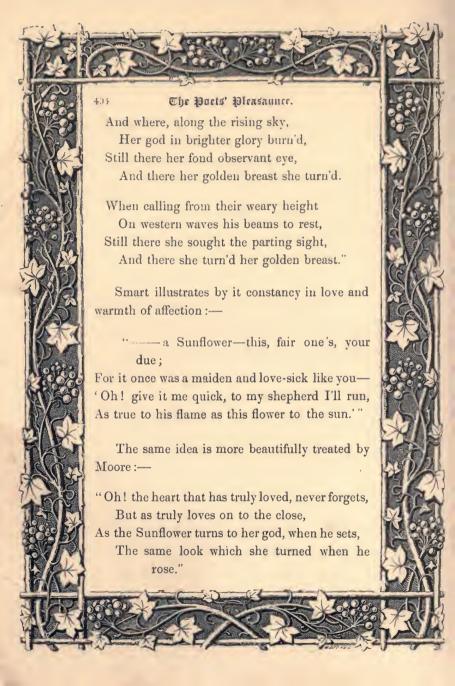
"——still her drooping head reclines
With faithful homage to his golden rays,
And though 'mid clouds their lustre he resigns,
An image of the constant heart displays,
While silent still she turns her fond pursuing gaze."

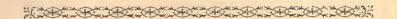














The Thistle.

CARDUUS.

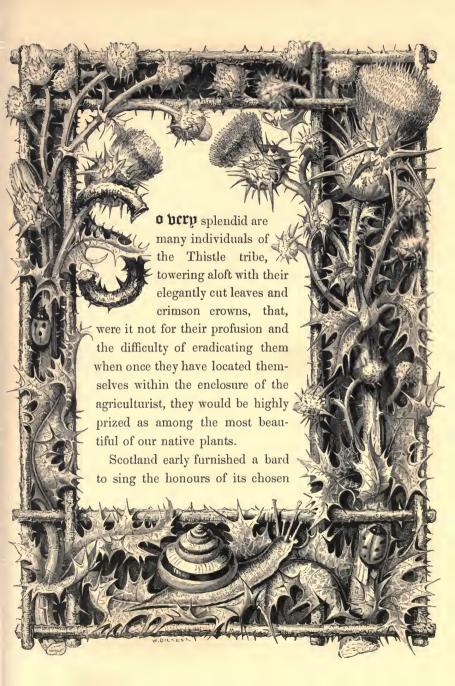


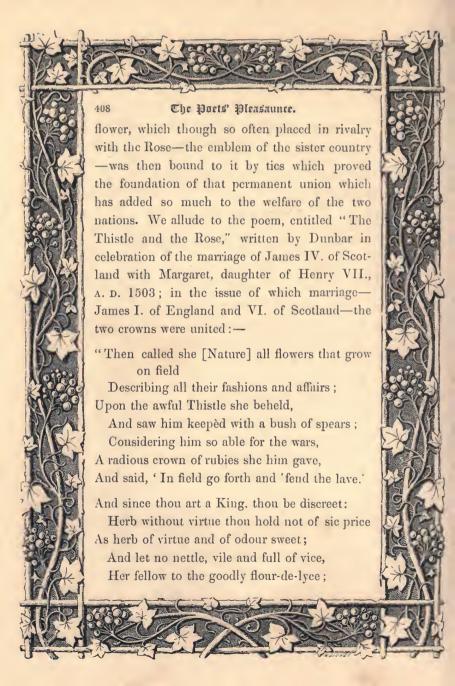


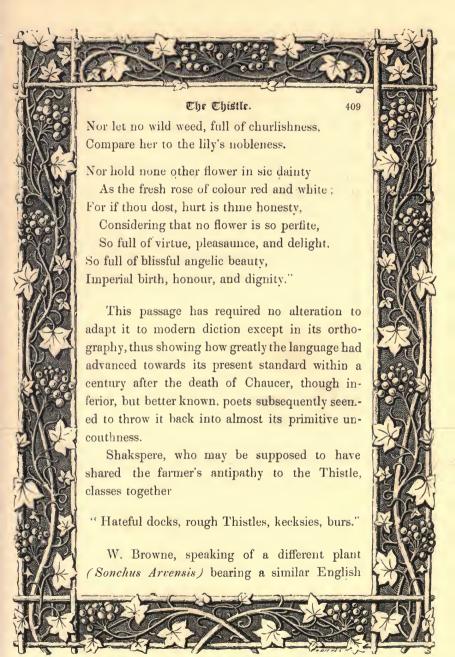
" Thistle, all with prickles set."

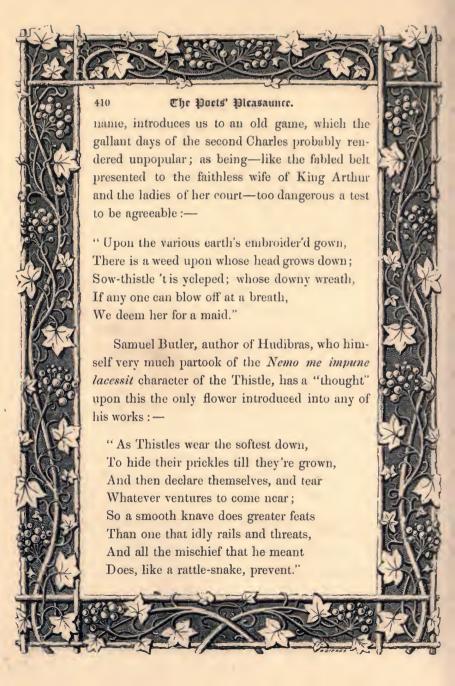
w. BROWNE,

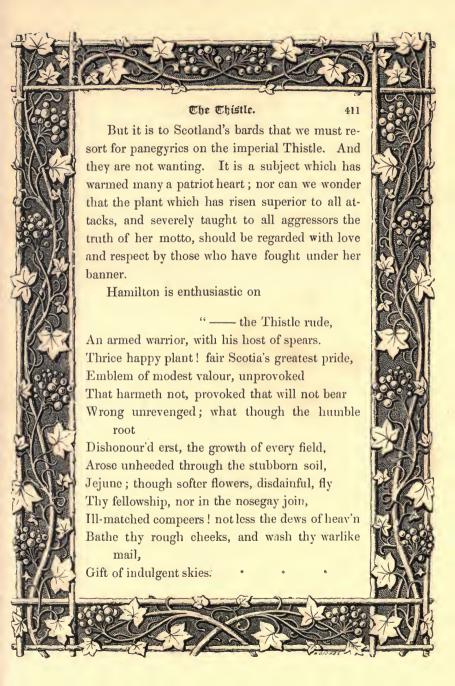


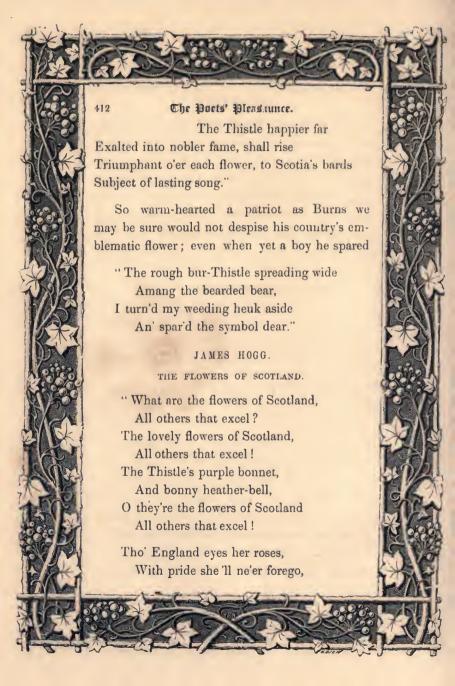


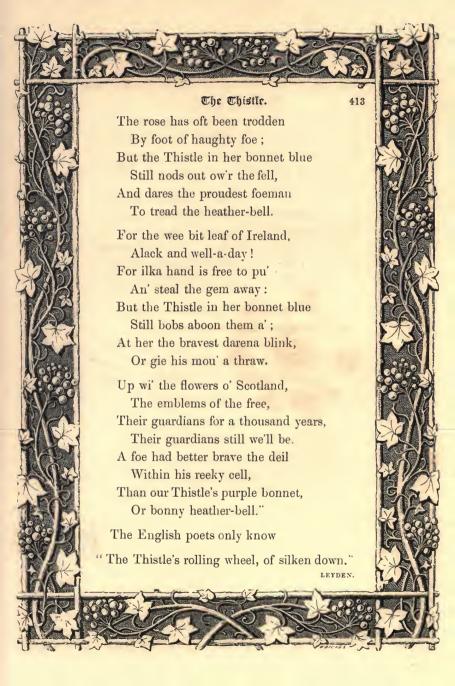


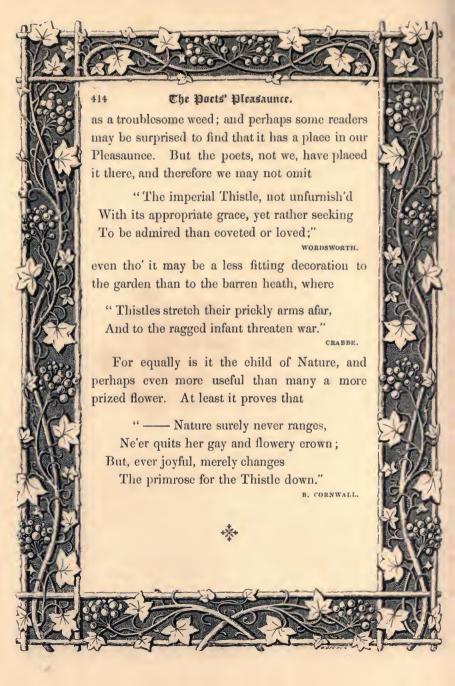


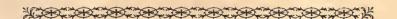














Sweet Herbs.





"Some Lavender — with Rosemary and Bays,
Sweet Marjoram, with her like, sweet Basil rare for smell:
The healthful Balm and Mint:—
The scentful Camomile, the ver'rous Costmarie;
Clear Hyssop, and therewith the comfortable Thyme,
Germander with the rest, each thing then in her prime.
Amongst these strewing kinds some other wild that grow,
As Burnet, all alroad, and Meadow-wort they throw."

DRAYTON.



